BRAVE AND BOLD

"YOU WON'T LEAVE ME TO PERISH ON THIS ISLAND?"

Brave and Bold

BY

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PREFACE

"Brave and Bold," by Horatio Alger, Jr., is a record of the experiences of a boy who assumes the responsibilities of manhood and takes care of his mother while his father, for a number of years, is given up as lost at sea.

He has some very unpleasant experiences, because he has a keen sense of right and wrong, and being a manly boy, wants to do the right thing. But the young hero does nothing which may not be achieved by any energetic boy, and it is hoped that the record of this brave boy may stimulate other boys, to manly endeavor and to a faithful and conscientious discharge of whatever duties may devolve upon them.

CHAPTER I

THE YOUNG RIVALS

The main schoolroom in the Millville Academy was brilliantly lighted, and the various desks were occupied by boys and girls of different ages from ten to eighteen, all busy writing under the general direction of Professor George W. Granville.

Professor Granville was a traveling teacher, and generally had two or three evening schools in progress in different places at the same time.

At nine, precisely, Professor Granville struck a small bell, and said in rather a nasal voice:

"You will now stop writing."

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the professor, "this evening completes the course of lessons which I have had the honor and pleasure of giving you. It gives me great pleasure to state that many of you have made great proficiency, and equaled my highest expectations. Let me say that I thank you for your patronage and for your good behavior during this course of lessons, and at the same time I bid you good-by."

There was a thumping of feet, mingled with a clapping of hands, as the professor closed his speech, and a moment later a boy of sixteen, occupying one of the front seats, rose, and, advancing with easy self-possession, drew from his pocket a gold pencil case, containing a pencil and pen, and spoke as follows:

"Professor Granville, the members of your writing

class, desirous of testifying their appreciation of your services as teacher, have contributed to buy this gold pencil case, which, in their name, I have great pleasure in presenting to you. Will you receive it with our best wishes for your continued success as a teacher of penmanship?"

"Ladies and gentlemen," the professor said, "I cannot give fitting utterance to the emotions that fill my heart at this most unexpected tribute of regard and mark of appreciation of my humble services. Believe me, I shall always cherish it as a most valued possession, and the sight of it will recall the pleasant, and, I hope, profitable hours which we have passed together this winter. To you, in particular, Mr. Rushton, I express my thanks for the touching and eloquent manner in which you have made the presentation, and, in parting with you all, I echo your own good wishes, and shall hope that you may be favored with an abundant measure of health and prosperity."

"The professor made a bully speech," said more than one after the exercises were over.

"So did Bob Rushton," said Edward Kent.

"I didn't see anything extraordinary in what he said," sneered Halbert Davis. "It seemed to me very commonplace."

"Perhaps you could do better yourself, Halbert," said Kent.

"Probably I could," said Halbert, haughtily.

"Why didn't you volunteer, then?"

"I didn't care to have anything to do with it."

Halbert turned away. He was a boy of sixteen, of

slender form and sallow complexion, dressed with more pretension than taste, and considered himself a young man of distinguished appearance, and was utterly blind to his personal defects.

What contributed to feed his vanity was his position as the son of the richest man in Millville. Indeed, his father was superintendent, and part owner, of the great brick factory on the banks of the river, in which hundreds found employment.

He drew on a pair of kid gloves, and looked about the room for Hester Paine, the lawyer's daughter, the reigning belle among the girls of her age in Millville. The fact was, that Halbert was rather smitten with Hester, and had made up his mind to escort her home on this particular evening, never doubting that his escort would be thankfully accepted.

But he was not quick enough. Robert Rushton had already approached Hester, and said, "Miss Hester, will you allow me to see you home?"

"I shall be very glad to have your company, Robert," said Hester.

Robert was a general favorite. He had a bright, attractive face, strong and resolute, when there was occasion, frank and earnest at all times. His clothes were neat and clean, but of coarse, mixed cloth, evidently of low price, suiting his circumstances, for he was poor, and his mother and himself depended mainly upon his earnings in the factory for the necessaries of life. Hester Paine, being the daughter of a well-to-do lawyer, belonged to the village aristocracy, and so far as worldly wealth was concerned, was far above Robert Rushton. But such considera-

tions never entered her mind, as she frankly, and with pleasure, accepted the escort of the poor factory boy.

Scarcely had she done so when Halbert Davis approached, smoothing his kid gloves, and pulling his necktie.

"Miss Hester," he said, consequentially, "I shall have great pleasure in escorting you home."

"Thank you," said Hester, "but I am engaged."

"Engaged!" repeated Halbert, "and to whom?"

"Robert Rushton has kindly offered to take me home."

"Robert Rushton!" said Halbert, disdainfully. "Never mind! I will relieve him of his duty."

"Thank you, Halbert," said Robert, who was standing by, "I won't trouble you. I will see Miss Paine home."

"Your escort was accepted because you were the first to offer it," said Halbert.

"Miss Hester," said Robert, "I will resign in favor of Halbert, if you desire it."

"I don't desire it," said the young girl, promptly. "Come Robert, I am ready if you are."

With a careless nod to Halbert, she took Robert's arm, and left the schoolhouse. Mortified and angry, Halbert looked after them, muttering, "I'll teach the factory boy a lesson. He'll be sorry for his impudence yet."

CHAPTER II

PUNISHING A COWARD

Mrs. Rushton and her son occupied a little cottage not far from the factory. Behind it were a few square rods of garden, in which Robert raised a few vegetables, working generally before or after his labor in the factory. The husband and father had followed the sea. Two years before, he left the port of Boston as captain of the ship *Norman*, bound for Calcutta. Not a word had reached his wife and son since then, and it was generally believed that it had gone to the bottom of the sea. Mrs. Rushton regarded herself as a widow, and Robert, entering the factory, took upon himself the support of the family. He was now able to earn six dollars a week, and this, with his mother's earnings in braiding straw for a hat manufacturer in a neighboring town, supported them.

Robert was up at six the next morning. He spent half an hour in sawing and splitting wood enough to last his mother through the day, and then entered the kitchen, where breakfast was ready.

"I am a little late this morning, mother," he said. "I must hurry down my breakfast, or I shall be late at the factory."

"Do you remember, Robert," said his mother, soberly, "it is just two years to-day since your poor father left us for Boston to take command of his ship. I little thought then that I should never see him again!" and Mrs. Rushton sighed.

"I wish we knew the particulars, mother. Some-

times I think father may have escaped from the ship in a boat, and may still be alive."

"I used to think it possible, Robert; but I have given up all hopes of it."

"How is it that father left no property? He received a good salary, did he not?"

"Yes; he had received a good salary for several years."

"He did not spend the whole of it, did he?"

"No, I am sure he did not. Your father was never extravagant. He was not in the habit of speaking of his business; but just before he went away, I remember him telling me that he had some money invested, and hoped to add more to it during the voyage which proved so fatal to him. That was all he said. Since his death, I have looked everywhere in the house for some papers which would throw light upon it; but I have been able to find nothing. I do not care so much for myself, but I should be glad if you didn't have to work so hard."

"Never mind me, mother; I'm young and strong. I can stand work—but it's hard on you."

"I am rich in having a good son, Robert."

"And I in a good mother," said Robert, affectionately. "And now, to change the subject, I suspect I have incurred the enmity of Halbert Davis."

"How is that?" asked Mrs. Rushton.

"I went home with Hester Paine last evening from writing school. Just as she had accepted my escort, Halbert came up, and in a condescending way, informed her that he would see her home. She told him that she was engaged to me. He said, coolly,

that he would relieve me of the duty, but I declined his obliging offer. He looked mad enough, I can tell you. He's full of self-conceit, and I suppose he wondered how any one could prefer me to him."

"I am sorry you have incurred his enmity, Robert. You know his father is the superintendent of the factory."

"Halbert isn't."

"But he may prejudice his father against you, and get you discharged."

"I don't think he would be quite so mean as that. We won't borrow trouble, mother. But time's up, and I must go."

Robert seized his hat and hurried to the mill. He was in his place when the great factory bell stopped ringing on the stroke of seven, and so escaped the fine, which would have cut off one-quarter of a day's pay.

Meanwhile, Halbert Davis had passed an uncomfortable and restless night. He had taken a fancy to Hester Paine, and he had fully determined to escort her home on the previous evening. But he had been cut out, and by Robert Rushton—one of his father's factory hands. This made his jealousy more intolerable, and humiliated his pride, and set him to work devising schemes for punishing Robert's presumption. He felt that it was Robert's duty, even though he had been accepted, to retire from the field as soon as his, Halbert's, desire was known. He made up his mind that he would give Robert a chance to apologize, and if he declined to do so he

would do what he could to get him turned out of the factory.

At twelve o'clock the factory bell pealed forth a welcome sound. It was the dinner hour, and a throng of men, women and children poured out of the great portals and hastened to their homes or boarding houses to dine. Among them was Robert Rushton. As he was walking homeward with his usual quick, alert step, he came upon Halbert Davis, at the corner of the street.

"I say, you fellow, stop a minute. I want to speak to you."

"My name is Robert Rushton. Call me by either of these names when you speak to me, and don't say 'you fellow.'"

"It seems to me," sneered Halbert, "that you are putting on airs for a factory boy."

"I am a factory boy, I acknowledge, and am not ashamed to acknowledge it. Is this all you have to say to me? If so, I will pass on, as I am in haste."

"I have something else to say to you. You were impudent to me last evening."

"Was I? Tell me how."

"Did you not insist on going home with Hester Paine, when I had offered my escort. You forgot your place."

"My place was at Hester Paine's side, since she had accepted my escort."

"It was very presumptuous in a factory boy like you offering your escort to a young lady like Miss Paine."

"I don't see it," said Robert, independently; "and

I don't think it struck Hester in that light. I assure you we had a very agreeable walk."

"You mustn't regard yourself as Miss Paine's equal because she condescended to walk with you," said Halbert. "You had better associate with those of your own class hereafter, and not push yourself in where your company is not agreeable."

"Keep your advice to yourself, Halbert Davis," said Robert. "As to Miss Hester Paine, I shall not ask your permission to walk with her, but shall do so whenever she chooses to accept my escort. Has she authorized you to speak for her?"

"No; but——"

"Then wait till she does."

Halbert was so incensed that, he raised his cane and struck our hero smartly upon the arm.

In a moment the cane was wrested from his grasp and applied to his own person with a sharp, stinging blow which broke the fragile stick in two.

Casting the piece upon the ground at his feet, Robert said, coolly:

"Two can play at that game, Halbert Davis. When you want another lesson come to me."

He passed his discomfited antagonist and hastened to the little cottage, where his mother was wondering what made him so much behind time.

CHAPTER III

THE SPECIAL DEPOSIT

Stung with mortification and more incensed against Robert than ever, Halbert hastened home. The house in which he lived was the largest and most pretentious in Millville.

Halbert entered the house, and throwing his hat down on a chair in the hall, entered the dining-room, his face still betraying his angry feelings.

"What's the matter, Halbert?" asked his mother.

"Do you see this?" said Halbert, displaying the pieces of his cane. "Robert Rushton broke it."

"He struck me with it hard enough to break it, and then threw the pieces on the ground."

"How dare he touch you?" asked Mrs. Davis, angrily.

"Oh, he's impudent enough for anything. He walked home with Hester Paine last evening from the writing school. I suppose she didn't know how to refuse him. I met him just now and told him he ought to know his place better than to offer his escort to a young lady like Hester. He got mad and struck me."

"The boy must be a young brute to turn upon you so violently," said Mrs. Davis. "He ought to be punished for it."

"I'll tell you how it can be done," said Halbert. "Just you speak to father about it, and get him dismissed from the factory."

"Yes; I'll speak to him to-night. He's gone away for the day."

At one o'clock Robert went back to the factory rather thoughtful. He thought it possible that he might hear something before evening of the dismission which probably awaited him, but the afternoon passed and he heard nothing.

On leaving the factory, he chanced to see Halbert again on the sidewalk a little distance in front and advancing toward him. This time, however, the young aristocrat did not desire a meeting, for, with a dark scowl, he crossed the street in time to avoid it.

Two years before, Captain Rushton, on the eve of sailing upon what proved to be his last voyage, called in the evening at the house of Mr. Davis, the superintendent of the Millville factory. He was seated at a table with a variety of papers spread out before him. These papers gave him considerable annoyance. He was preparing his semi-annual statement of account, and found himself indebted to the corporation in a sum three thousand dollars in excess of the funds at his command. He had been drawn into the whirlpool of speculation, and, through a New York broker, had invested considerable amounts in stocks, which had depreciated in value. In doing this he had made use, to some extent, of the funds of the corporation, which he was now at a loss how to replace. He was considering where he could apply for a temporary loan of three thousand dollars when the captain entered.

"Good-evening, Captain Rushton," he said, with a forced smile. "Sit down. I am glad to see you."

"Thank you, Mr. Davis. It will be the last call I

shall make upon you for a considerable time. I sail to-morrow for Calcutta."

"I wish you a prosperous voyage, captain."

"Thank you. If things go well, I expect to come home with quite an addition to my little savings. And that brings me to the object of my visit this evening. You must know, Mr. Davis, I have saved up in the last ten years a matter of five thousand dollars. Wouldn't my wife be surprised if she knew her husband were so rich?"

"Your wife doesn't know of it?" asked the superintendent, surprised.

"Not at all. Now Mr. Davis, I want you to take this money, and take care of it, while I am gone on my present voyage. Can you oblige me?"

"Certainly, captain," said the superintendent, briskly. "I shall have great pleasure in obliging an old friend."

"I am much obliged to you."

"Don't mention it. Am I to pay the interest to your wife?"

"No. I have left a separate fund in a savings bank for her to draw upon. As I told you, I want to surprise her by and by. So not a word, if you please, about this deposit."

"Your wishes shall be regarded," said the superintendent. "Have you brought the money with you?"

"Yes," said the captain, drawing from his pocket a large wallet. "I have the whole amount here in large bills. Count it, if you please, and see that it is right."

The superintendent took the roll of bills from the

hands of his neighbor, and counted them over twice.

"It is quite right," he said. "Here are five thousand dollars. Now, let me write you out a receipt for them."

He drew before him a sheet of paper, and dipping his pen in the inkstand, wrote a receipt in the usual form, which he handed back to the captain, who received it and put it back in his wallet.

"Now," said the captain, in a tone of satisfaction, "my most important business is transacted. If anything should happen to me," he added, his voice faltering a little, "you will pay it over to my wife and child."

"Assuredly," said the superintendent; "but don't let us think of such a sad contingency. I fully expect to pay it back into your hands with handsome interest."

"Let us hope so," said the captain, recovering his cheerfulness. "And now good-by!"

"Good-night, captain," said the superintendent, accompanying him to the door.

The superintendent went back to his study, his heart lightened of anxiety.

"Could anything be more fortunate?" he ejaculated. "This help comes to me just when it is most needed. Thanks to my special deposit, I can make may semi-annual settlement, and have two thousand dollars over."

CHAPTER IV

DISCHARGED

After some months Mr. Davis met Mrs. Rushton in the street one day.

"Have you heard from your husband, Mrs. Rushton?" he inquired.

"No, Mr. Davis, not yet. I am beginning to feel anxious."

"The voyage is a long one. There are many ways of accounting for his silence."

Six months more passed, and still no tidings of the ship or its commander. Even the most sanguine now gave her up as lost, including the owners. It was a wicked thing to rejoice over such a calamity, but his affairs were now so entangled that a sudden demand for the five thousand dollars would have ruined him. To soothe his conscience—he received Robert into the factory, and the boy's wages, as we already know, constituted their main support.

Such was the state of things at the commencement of our story.

When the superintendent reached home in the evening he was at once assailed by his wife and son, who gave a highly colored account of the insult which Halbert had received from Robert Rushton.

"Did he have any reason for striking you, Halbert?" asked the superintendent.

"No," answered Halbert, unblushingly.

"Well, what do you want me to do?" he asked.

"Discharge the boy from your employment," said his wife, promptly.

"I cannot do what you wish," said the superintendent, with some firmness, for he felt that it would indeed be a piece of meanness to eject from the factory the boy whom he had already so deeply wronged; "but I will send for young Rushton and require him to apologize to Halbert."

"And if he won't do it?" demanded Halbert.

"Then I will send him away."

"All right!" thought Halbert; "I am satisfied; for I know he never will consent to apologize."

Halbert had good reasons for this opinion knowing, as he did that he had struck the first blow, a circumstance he had carefully concealed from his father. Under the circumstances he knew very well that his father would be called upon to redeem his promise.

The next morning, at the regular hour, our hero went to the factory, and taking his usual place, set to work.

At a quarter after eight the foreman of the room in which he was employed came up to Robert and touched him on the shoulder.

"Mr. Davis wishes to see you in his office," he said.

"Now for it!" thought Robert, as he left his work and made his way to the superintendent's room.

The superintendent sat at an office table writing a letter.

"Mr. Baker tells me you wish to see me, Mr. Davis," said Robert.

"I hear a bad account of you, Rushton. I hear

that you have been behaving like a young ruffian," said Mr. Davis.

"This is a serious charge, Mr. Davis," said Robert, gravely, " and I hope you will be kind enough to let me know what I have done, and the name of my accuser."

"I mean to do so. Probably it will be enough to say that your accuser is my son, Halbert."

"I supposed so. I had a difficulty with Halbert yesterday, but I consider he was in fault."

"Did you strike him?"

"Yes, but not until he had struck me first."

"You must have said something to provoke him." continued the superintendent, "or he would not have done it."

"If you will allow me," said Robert, "I will give you an account of the whole affair. Briefly he told what occurred.

"You must have been in a great passion."

"I don't think I was in any greater passion than Halbert."

"In view of the violence you made use of, I consider that you owe my son an apology."

"If any apology is made," said our hero, firmly, "it ought to come from Halbert to me. I acknowledge that I broke the cane, and I suppose it is only right that I should pay for it. I am willing to do that, but not to apologize."

"That will not be sufficient," said the superintendent. I have required you to apologize to my son, and I ask you for the last time whether you propose to comply with my wishes."

"No, sir," said Robert, boldly.

"Do you know to whom you are speaking, boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am not only the father of the boy you have assaulted, but I am also the superintendent of this factory, and your employer. I can discharge you from the factory."

"I know you can," said Robert.

"Of course, I should be sorry to resort to such an extreme measure, but, if you defy my authority, I may be compelled to do so."

"Mr. Davis," he said, boldly and firmly, "it will be a serious thing for me if I lose my place here, for my mother and I are poor, and my wages make the greatest part of our income. But I cannot make this apology you require. I will sooner lose my place."

"Then you are discharged from the factory. You will report your discharge to Mr. Baker, and he will pay you what you have earned this week."

Robert left the office with a bold bearing, but a heart full of trouble.

"Mr. Baker," he said, addressing the foreman of his room, on his return from the superintendent's office, "I am discharged."

"Discharged?" repeated the foreman in surprise. "There must be some mistake about this."

"There is no dissatisfaction with my work that I know of, but I got into a quarrel with Halbert Davis yesterday, and his father wants me to apologize to him. I would if I felt that I were in fault. I am not too proud for that. But the fact is, Halbert ought to apologize to me."

"Halbert is a mean boy. I don't blame you in the least."

"So I am to report my discharge to you, and ask you for my wages."

The account was soon settled, and Robert left the factory. He was slowly walking along, when he once more encountered Halbert Davis.

"Where are you going?" demanded Halbert.

"Home."

"I thought you worked in the factory?"

"Did you?" asked Robert, looking full in his face, and reading the exultation he did not attempt to conceal.

"Perhaps you have got turned out?" suggested Halbert, with a malicious smile.

"You would be glad of that, I suppose," said our hero.

"I don't think I should cry much," said Halbert. "It's true, then, is it?"

"Yes; it's true."

"You won't put on so many airs when you go around begging for cold victuals. It'll be some time before you walk with Hester Paine again."

"I shall probably walk with her sooner than you will."

"She won't notice a beggar."

"There is not much chance of my becoming a beggar, Halbert Davis; but I would rather be one than be as mean as you. I will drop you a slight hint, which you had better bear in mind. It won't be any safer to insult me now than it was yesterday. I can't lose my place a second time."

Halbert instinctively moved aside, while our hero passed on without taking further notice of him.

"I hate him!" he muttered to himself. "I hope he won't find anything to do. If he wasn't so strong, I'd give him a thrashing."

CHAPTER V

ROBERT IS NOT IDLE

Great was the dismay of Mrs. Rushton when she heard from Robert that he was discharged from the factory.

"Oh, Robert, what is going to become of us?" she exclaimed, nervously.

"Don't be alarmed my dear mother," said Robert. "Have faith in me for a week, mother, and see if I don't earn something in that time. Now, how would you like to have some fish for supper? I'll borrow Will Paine's boat, if he will let me have it, and see if I can't catch something."

Robert went out into the garden and dug some worms for bait. Meanwhile his mother made a couple of sandwiches. Provided thus, he walked quickly to the house of Squire Paine, and rang the bell.

"Is Will home?" he asked.

"Here I am, old fellow!" And William Paine, a boy of our hero's size and age, appeared. "Come right up."

"How did you happen to be at leisure?" he asked.

"I'm turned off. Through the influence of Halbert Davis."

"Halbert is a disgusting sneak. Tell me about it."

This Robert did, necessarily bringing in Hester's name.

"He needn't think my sister will walk with him," said Will. "She'd rather walk with you any day. What are you going to do now?"

"The first thing I am going to do is to catch some fish, if you will lend me your boat."

"Of course I will! I'll lend it to you for the next three months. Haven't you heard the news. I'm going to boarding school. I'm packing my trunk now."

"Will, are you in earnest about the boat?"

"Sure I am."

"I shall be very glad of the chance, Will."

"I'm to start to-morrow morning. If it wasn't for that, I'd go out fishing with you. Here is the boat key."

Robert took the key with satisfaction. He knew where the boat was usually kept, and made his way thither.

Throwing in the oars, he jumped in, and began to push off, when he heard himself called, and looking up saw Halbert Davis standing on the bank.

"You have no business in that boat! It's William Paine's boat. He's going to let me have it while he's away at school."

"I don't think he will. I'm to take charge of the boat while he is away."

Halbert looked after him enviously as he rowed the boat out into the stream.

Robert, though not a professional fisherman, was not wholly inexperienced. This morning he was quite lucky, catching quite a fine lot of fish. It occurred to him that he could sell them at a market store in the village.

On reaching the shore, he strung the fish and walked to the market.

Stepping into the store, he attracted the attention of the proprietor.

"That's a fine lot of fish you have there, Robert. What are you going to do with them?"

"I'm going to sell most of them to you, if I can."

"I'll give you two cents a pound for them."

"I'll carry this one home, and you can weigh the rest."

The rest proved to weigh forty-five pounds. The marketman handed Robert ninety cents.

"Shall you want some to-morrow?" he asked.

"Yes, if you can let me have them earlier."

"I'll go out early in the morning, then."

"Very well; bring me what you have, and we'll strike a trade."

Mrs. Rushton was sitting at her work, in rather a disconsolate frame of mind. A noise was heard at the door, and Robert entered the room, bringing the fish he had reserved.

"That's a fine, large fish," said his mother.

"I also sold forty-five pounds to Minturn, at two cents a pound. He has engaged me to supply him with fish every day. I forgot to tell you, I'm to have

Will Paine's boat for nothing. He's going to boarding school, and has asked me to take care of it for him."

On the next two mornings Robert went out at five o'clock, in order to get home in time for the market-wagon. He met with fair luck, but not as good as on the first day.

On the morning succeeding he was out of luck.

"If I don't do better than this," he reflected, "I shan't make very good wages."

He paddled about idly, a few rods from the shore, having drawn up his line and hook.

All at once, he heard a voice hailing him from the river bank:

"Boat ahoy!"

"Hallo!" answered Robert.

"Can you take me across the river?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll pay you for your trouble."

The stranger jumped in the boat.

"Where do you want to go?"

"Straight across. There's an old man named Nichols lives on the other side, isn't there?"

"Yes; he lives by himself."

"He's rich isn't he?" asked the stranger.

"So people say."

"What does he do with his money?"

"They say that he is afraid to trust banks, and hides his money in the earth."

A few minutes brought them to the other shore. The passenger jumped ashore, first handing a silver half-dollar to our hero.

"He's going to the old man's house," decided Robert. "I wonder whether he has any business with him?"

CHAPTER VI

THE UNWELCOME GUEST

The stranger walked, with hasty strides, in the direction of an old farmhouse, which could be seen a quarter of a mile away.

The owner, Paul Nichols, was a man advanced in years, living quite alone. He had been happily married to a good wife, and was blessed with two children. But they were all taken from him in one week by an epidemic, and his life was made solitary and cheerless.

"I wonder whether the old man is at home!" he said to himself, as he entered the front yard.

He stepped to the front door, and, lifting the old-fashioned knocker, sounded a loud summons.

But the summons appeared to be without effect. "I'll try him again," but still no one came to the door. The fact was, that the old farmer had gone away early, with a load of hay.

He stepped to the front window, and looked in. All that met his gaze was a bare, dismantled room.

He went round to the back door, and peered through the window, but saw no one.

The door proved to be locked, but the windows

were easily raised. Through one of these he clambered into the kitchen, which was the only room occupied by the old farmer, with the exception of a room above, which he used as a bedchamber. Here he cooked and ate his meals, and here he spent his solitary evenings.

"It is eighteen years since I was last in this room," the visitor said. "I've roamed pretty much all over the world in that time, and I've come back as poor as I went away. In all that time my Uncle Paul has been moored fast to this hearthstone, and been piling up gold. As far as I know, I'm his nearest relation, and there's no reason why he shouldn't launch out a little for the benefit of the family."

He opened the closet door, but there was nothing eatable to be seen, except half a loaf of bread.

Search as carefully as he might, nothing better could be found.

"My uncle must be more of a miser than I thought, if he stints himself to such fare as this. It's rather a bad lookout for me. What's that the boy said? He don't trust any banks, but keeps his money concealed in the earth. I'll look about me, and see if I can't find some of his hidden hoards."

"He's likely to hide his gold under the hearth. I'll try the hearth first."

He kneeled down, and began to examine the bricks. But there was no indication of disturbance.

"That isn't the right spot," reflected the visitor. "Perhaps the gold is buried in the cellar."

He lit a candle, and went cautiously down the rickety staircase. But he had hardly reached the bottom

of the stairs, when he caught the sound of a wagon entering the yard.

He ascended the stairs, and re-entered the room just as the farmer opened the door and entered.

On seeing a tall, bearded stranger, standing before him in his own kitchen, with a lighted candle in his hand, Paul Nichols uttered a shrill cry of alarm.

"I see you don't know me, Uncle Paul?" said the intruder, familiarly.

"Who are you that call me Uncle Paul?" asked the old man, somewhat reassured.

"Benjamin Haley, your sister's son."

"Are you really Ben Haley?" asked the old man,

"To be sure I am."

"What were you doing with that candle?" asked Paul.

"I went down cellar with it, in search of something to eat."

"There's nothing down cellar. Don't go there again," said the old man, still uneasy.

"Ha, Uncle Paul! I've guessed your secret so quick," he said to himself. "Some of your money is hidden away in the cellar, I'm thinking." But he only said aloud, "Well if you haven't got any we must do without it. I suppose you are pretty rich?"

"What put such a thing into your head? I'm poor, Benjamin."

"Then what have you been doing with your savings all these years?"

"It has taken all I had to live. There isn't any money to be made in farming."

"It must be dismal enough living alone. I am your nephew and nearest relation. I feel that it is my duty to stay with you."

"I cannot afford to have you here. You'd better go away."

"I'll go away on one condition," said Ben Haley.

"What is that?"

"Give me, or lend me, a hundred dollars."

"Do you think I'm made of money?" asked Paul.

"Go away! You are a bad man."

"I'm sorry I can't oblige you by going, Uncle Paul. Let me stay with you a day or two, and then I may go."

"Come out to the barn with me while I milk," said Paul the next morning, not daring to leave his nephew by himself.

"I'm not interested in cows, uncle," he said. "I'll be here when you come back."

With a sigh his uncle left the house, only half reassured. That he had reason for his distrust was proved by Ben Haley's movements. He lighted a candle, and going down cellar, first securing a pickax, struck into the earthen flooring, and began to work energetically.

"I am sure some of the old man's money is here," he said to himself. "I must work fast, or he'll catch me at it."

Half an hour later Paul Nichols re-entered the house. He looked for his nephew, but his seat was vacant. He thought he heard a dull thud in the cellar beneath. He hurried to the staircase, and tottered down. Ben had come upon a tin quart-measure

partly filled with gold coins, and was stooping over, transferring them to his pocket.

With a hoarse cry like that of an animal deprived of its young, his uncle sprang upon him, and fastened his claw-like nails in the face of his burly nephew.

CHAPTER VII

ROBERT COMES TO THE RESCUE

The attack was so sudden, and the old man's desperation so reinforced his feeble strength, that Ben Haley was thrown forward, and the measure of gold coins fell from his hand. But he quickly recovered himself.

"Let me alone," he said, sternly, forcibly removing his uncle's hands from his face, but not before the clawlike nails had drawn blood. "Let me alone, if you know what is best for yourself."

"Look here, Uncle Paul," said Ben, confining the old man's arms to his side, "it's time we had a little talk together. Now let us come to an understanding. You are rich and I am poor."

"Rich!" repeated Paul.

"Yes; at any rate, you have got this farm, and more money hidden away than you will ever use. I am poor. You can spare me this money here as well as not."

"It is all I have."

"You have plenty more, but I will be satisfied with this."

"Never!" exclaimed Paul, struggling hard to free himself.

He took his uncle up in his strong arms, and moved toward the stairs.

"Are you going to murder me?" asked Paul.

"You will find out what I am going to do," said Ben, grimly.

He carried his uncle upstairs, and proceeded to tie him hand and foot, despite his feeble opposition.

Leaving him on the floor, he again descended the cellar stairs.

The old man groaned in spirit as he found himself about to be robbed. But help was near at hand, though he knew it not. Robert Rushton had thought more than once of his unknown passenger of the day before, and the particular inquiries he made concerning Paul Nichols and his money. So the next morning, he rowed across to the same place where he had landed Ben, and fastening his boat, went up to the farmhouse. He reached it just as Ben, having secured the old man, had gone back into the cellar to gather up the gold.

Robert looked into the window, and, to his surprise, saw the old farmer lying bound hand and foot. He quickly leaped in, and asked:

"What is the matter? Who has done this?"

"My nephew tied me here, and is stealing all my gold. Cut the ropes."

Robert drew a jackknife from his pocket, and did as he was bidden.

"Now," said Paul, "while I bolt the cellar door, you go upstairs, and in the closet of the room over

this you will find a gun. It is loaded. Bring it down."

Robert hurried upstairs and quickly returned with the weapon.

"If he breaks through the door, fire," said Paul.

Ben Haley was so busily occupied that he did not hear the noise of Robert's entrance into the room above.

Finally, not succeeding in finding more gold, he pocketed what he had found, and went up the cellar stairs. He attempted to open the door, when, to his great surprise, he found that it resisted his efforts.

"You can't come up!" exclaimed the old man, in triumph. "I've bolted the door."

"Open the door, or I will burst it open."

The door remaining locked, he drew back and kicked the door powerfully.

"Well, will you unlock it now?" he demanded.

"No," said the old man, "not unless you carry back the gold."

"I won't do that."

He made a fresh attack upon the door. This time he did not desist until he had broken through the panel. Then with the whole force he could command he threw himself against the upper part of the door, and it came crashing into the kitchen. Ben Haley leaped through the opening and confronted his uncle, who receded in alarm. The sight of the burly form of his nephew, and his stern and menacing countenance, once more made him quail.

Ben Haley looked around him, and his eyes lighted

upon Robert Rushton standing beside the door with the gun in his hand.

"Just lay down that gun, boy! It isn't meant for children like you. I know you. You're the boy that rowed me across the river."

"Then lay down the gold you have in your pockets," said our hero, still pointing his gun at Haley.

"Good boy! Brave boy!" said the old man.

"Look here, boy," said Haley, "If you don't put down that gun in double quick time, you'll repent it. One word—yes or no!"

"No," said Robert resolutely.

No sooner had he uttered the monosyllable than Haley sprang toward him with the design of wresting the gun from him. But Robert had his finger upon the trigger and fired. The bullet entered the shoulder of the ruffian, but he seized the musket and forcibly wrested it from our hero. He raised it in in both hands and would probably in his blind fury have killed him on the spot but for the sudden opening of the outer door, and entrance of a neighboring farmer. This changed Haley's intention. Feeling that the odds were against him, he sprang through the window, gun in hand, and ran with rapid strides toward the river.

"What's the matter?" demanded the new arrival.

"He's gone off with my gold," exclaimed Paul Nichols. "Run after him, catch him! He's taken all my money—I shall die in the poorhouse. Go after him, both of you. He can't hurt you."

The neighbor followed Robert, who at once started in pursuit of the escaped burglar. He was still in

sight, though already near the river bank. Looking over his shoulder he saw Robert and the farmer on his track, and he clutched his gun the more firmly.

Thoughts of crossing the stream by swimming occurred to him. A sailor by profession, he was an expert swimmer, and the river was not wide enough to daunt him. But his pockets were filled with the gold he had stolen, and gold is well known to be the heaviest of all the metals. But nevertheless he could not leave it behind since it was for this he had incurred his present peril. In this uncertainty he reached the bank of the river, when to his surprise and joy his eye rested upon Robert's boat.

He sprang in, and seizing one of the oars, pushed out into the stream. When Robert and his companion reached the shore he was already floating at a safe distance.

"He's got my boat!" exclaimed our hero.

"You're a little late!" shouted Ben Haley. "There's a reckoning coming betwixt you and me, young one, and it'll be a heavy one. It may not come for years, but it'll come at last, you may be sure of that."

"I wish I had another boat," said Robert. "We could soon overtake him."

"Better let him go," said the neighbor. "He was always a bad one, that Ben Haley. I couldn't begin to tell you all the bad things he did when he was a boy. He was a regular dare-devil. You must look out for him, or he'll do you a mischief some time, to pay for that wound."

"He brought it on himself," said Robert. "I gave him warning."

He went back to the farmhouse to tell Paul of his nephew's escape. He was brave and bold, but the malignant glance with which Ben Haley uttered his menace, gave him a vague sense of discomfort.

CHAPTER VIII

REVENGE

In spite of his wounded arm Ben Haley succeeded in propelling the boat to the opposite shore. The blood was steadily, though slowly, flowing from his wound, and had already stained his shirt red for a considerable space.

He had been penniless; now he was the possessor of—as near as he could estimate, five hundred dollars in gold.

On reaching the shore he was about to leave the boat to its fate, when he espied a boy standing at a little distance, with a hatchet in his hand.

"Come here, boy," he said. "Is that your hatchet? Would you mind selling it to me if I will give you money enough to buy a new one?"

"Yes, sir, I guess so."

"Here is the money, and twenty-five cents more to pay you for your trouble in going to the store."

The boy pocketed the money with satisfaction, and hurried away.

He drew the boat up and fastened it. Then he deliberately proceeded to cut away at the bottom with his newly acquired hatchet.

He hacked away with such energy that soon there was a large hole in the bottom of the boat. Not content with inflicting this damage, he cut it in various other places. "And now I must be getting away," he said, making his way to the station.

The station-master noticed the blood upon his shirt.

"Are you hurt, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, a little," said Ben Haley. "How soon will the train be here?"

"It's coming now. Don't you hear it?"

When Haley was fairly on board the cars, and the train was under way, he felt considerably relieved.

At this very moment Halbert Davis was sauntering idly and discontentedly through the streets of the village. He had that morning at the breakfast table asked his father to give him a boat like Will Paine's, but Mr. Davis had answered by a decided refusal.

It was this refusal which made Halbert discontented and unhappy. The factory boy, as he sneeringly called him, could have a boat, while he, a gentleman's son, was forced to go without one. He wondered whether Robert was out this morning. So, unconsciously, his steps led him to the shore of the river, where he knew the boat was generally kept. He cast his eye toward it, when what was his surprise to find the object of his desire half full of water, with a large hole in the bottom and defaced in other respects.

Halbert's first emotion was surprise, his second was gratification. His rival could no longer enjoy

the boat which he had envied him. Not only that, but he would get into trouble with Mr. Paine on account of the damage which it had received.

"I wonder how it happened?" thought Halbert. "Most likely he won't let Mr. Paine know."

Straightway the plan suggested itself of going to the lawyer himself and informing him of Robert's delinquency. It would be a very agreeable way of taking revenge upon him. He at once directed his steps toward Mr. Paine's office. On the way he overtook Hester Paine.

"Good-morning, Hester."

Hester Paine was not particularly well pleased with the meeting. She had been made acquainted by her brother with the quarrel between Halbert and Robert, and the mean revenge which the former had taken in procuring the dismissal of the latter from the factory. Having a partiality for Robert, this was not likely to recommend his enemy in her eyes.

"Good-morning, Mr. Davis," she said, with cool politeness.

"You're very polite, Miss Hester," said Halbert, angrily. "I can tell you some news."

"Well, what is it?" demanded Hester.

"Your brother was foolish enough to leave his boat in Rushton's care."

"That is no news. Will was very glad to do Robert a favor."

He'll be sorry enough now. Because the boat is completely ruined."

"I don't believe it," said Hester hastily.

"It's true, though. I was down at the river just

now, and saw it with my own eyes. There is a great hole in the bottom, and it is hacked with a hatchet, so that it wouldn't bring half price."

"Do you know who did it?" asked Hester, with the momentary thought that Halbert himself might have been tempted by his hatred into the commission of the outrage.

"No, I don't. It was only accidentally I saw it."

"Was Robert at the boat?"

"No, I have not seen him."

"Then I am sure some enemy has done it. I am sure it is no fault of his."

"If your brother had let me have the boat, it wouldn't have happened. I offered him a fair price for its use."

"He won't be sorry he refused, whatever has happened. But I must bid you good-morning, Mr. Davis," and the young lady, who was now at her own gate, opened it, and entered.

He waited until Hester had entered the house, and then bent his steps to Mr. Paine's office, which was a small one-story building in one corner of the yard.

The lawyer was sitting at a table covered with papers, from which he looked up as Halbert entered the office.

"Sit down, Halbert," he said. "Any message from your father?"

"No, sir."

"Well, if you have any business, you may state it at once, as I am quite busy."

"It is about the boat which your son lent to Robert Rushton."

"Explain yourself," he said.

So Halbert told the story once more, taking good care to make the damage quite as great as it was.

"That is very strange," said the lawyer, thoughtfully. "I can't conceive how such damage could have happened to the boat. You say there was not only a hole in the bottom, but it was otherwise defaced and injured?"

"Yes, sir, it looked as if it had been hacked by a hatchet."

"Then it is quite clear that Robert could have had nothing to do with it."

"I don't see why Robert hasn't been here and let me know of this," said Mr. Paine, musing.

"He was probably afraid to tell you said Halbert, with a slight sneer.

"I know him better than that. You can testify," added the lawyer, "that he is not deficient in bravery."

"I thought I would come and tell you," said Halbert coloring a little. "I thought you would like to know."

"You are very kind to take so much trouble," said Mr. Paine, but there was neither gratitude nor cordiality in his tone.

Halbert thought it was time to be going, and accordingly got up and took his leave. As he opened the office door to go out, he found himself face to face with Robert Rushton, who passed him with a slight nod, and with an air of trouble entered the presence of his friend's father.

CHAPTER IX

HALBERT'S MALICE

Robert was forced by Ben Haley's taking possession of his boat to give up for the present his design of recrossing the river. He felt bound to go back and inform Paul of Ben's escape.

"He carried off my gold," exclaimed Paul, in anguish. "Why didn't you catch him?"

"He had too much start of us," said Robert's companion. "How much money did he take away with him?"

"More than five hundred dollars," wailed the old man. "Get a boat and go after him."

"Where can we find a boat, Mr. Dunham?"

"There's one about a quarter of a mile down the stream—Stetson's boat."

"Let's go, then."

Robert and Mr. Dunham started, and were soon rowing across the river in Stetson's boat.

"There's my boat now," said Robert.

Quickly they rowed alongside. Then to his great sorrow Robert perceived the malicious injury which his enemy had wrought.

"Oh, Mr. Dunham, look at that!" he said, struck with grief. "The boat is spoiled!"

"Not so bad as that. It can be mended."

"What will Will Paine say? What will his father say?"

"Then it isn't your boat?"

"No, that is the worst of it."

"You can get it repaired, so that it will look almost as well as new."

If Robert had had plenty of money, this suggestion would have comforted him, but it will be remembered that he was almost penniless. One thing was clear—Mr. Paine must at once be informed of the injury suffered by the boat.

He had scarcely got on shore than the boy who had sold Ben Haley the hatchet strolled up.

"Who was that man who came across in your boat?" he asked.

"Did you see him?" asked Robert eagerly.

"To be sure I did," said Tom Green, with satisfaction. "I sold him my old hatchet for money enough to buy a new one, and he gave me a quarter besides for my trouble."

"I wish you hadn't done it, Tom," said Robert, gravely. "See what he's done with it."

"What did he do that for?" he asked.

"To be revenged on me. Can you tell me where he went?"

"No; I left him here, while I went to the store for a new hatchet."

"We'd better go to the railroad depot, Mr. Dunham," he said. "He'd be most likely to go there."

"You're right. We'll go."

They walked rapidly to the station, but too late, of course, for the train. The station-master was standing on the platform.

"Mr. Cross," said Robert, "I want to find out if a particular man left by the last train. I'll describe him."

"Yes," said the station-master, he had a wound in the shoulder."

"For what place did he buy a ticket?"

"For Cranston; but that ain't no guide. When he gets there he'll buy a ticket further on."

Had there been a telegraph station, Robert would have telegraphed on to have Ben Haley stopped, but there was none nearer than the next town.

Robert now bent his steps to Mr. Paine's office. This brings us to his meeting with Halbert Davis at the door. He was slightly surprised at the encounter, but was far from guessing the object of Halbert's call.

Mr. Paine looked up as he entered, and had no difficulty in guessing his errand.

"What can I do for you, Robert?" he asked kindly.

"I bring bad news, Mr. Paine," said our hero.

"It's about the boat isn't it?" said the lawyer.

"What do you know about it?" asked Robert.

"Yes; a disinterested friend brought the news."

"Halbert Davis?"

"The same. He takes a strong personal interest in your affairs," added the lawyer, dryly. "Now tell me how it happened."

Robert gave a full explanation, the lawyer occasionally asking a question.

"It seems, then," he said, "that you incurred this man's enmity by your defense of Mr. Nichols' money."

"Yes, sir."

"It was incurred in a good cause. I can't blame you, nor will my son. I will get Mr. Plane, the car-

penter, to look at the boat and see what he can do to repair it."

"Some time I will pay you the cost of the repairs, Mr. Paine. I would now if I had any money; but you know how I am situated."

"I shall not call upon you to do that," said the lawyer, kindly. "It was not your fault."

"But the damage would not have happened if Will had not lent the boat to me."

"That is true; but in undertaking the defense of Mr. Nichols you showed a pluck and courage which most boys would not have exhibited. I am interested like all good citizens, in the prevention of theft, and in this instance I am willing to assume the cost."

"You are very kind, Mr. Paine. I was afraid you would blame me."

"No, my boy; I am not so unreasonable. It will save me some trouble if you will yourself see Mr. Plane and obtain from him an estimate of the probable expense of putting the boat in order."

Robert left the office, feeling quite relieved by the manner in which his communication had been received.

CHAPTER X

ON THE RAILROAD TRACK

Robert saw the carpenter, but he would not engage to give his attention to the boat under a week.

"I am sure I don't see what you can do," said Mrs. Rushton.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Robert, "I'll go on Sligo Hill and pick blueberries; I was passing a day or two ago, and saw the bushes quite covered. Just give me a couple of tin pails, and I'll see what I can do."

The pails were provided, and Robert started on his expedition. At the end of three hours he had filled both pails containing, as near as he could estimate, eight quarts. "Now I suppose I must turn peddler, and dispose of them."

The first house at which he called was Mr. Paine's. He was about to pass, when he saw Hester at the window.

Hester had seen him also, and she answered the bell herself.

"I am glad to see you, Robert," she said, frankly "Won't you come in?"

"I am sure mother will buy some. Will you wait a minute while I go ask her?"

Hester soon returned with the authority to buy four quarts. I suspect that she was the means of influencing so large a purchase.

Robert left the house with forty cents in his pocket, the first fruits of his afternoon's work. Besides, he

had four quarts left, for which he expected to find a ready sale.

The next day Robert again repaired to Sligo. He had realized eighty cents from his sales the previous day, and he felt that picking berries was much better than remaining idle.

Returning home with well-filled pails, he walked a part of the way on the railroad, as this shortened the distance. He had not walked far when he discovered on the track a huge rock, large enough to throw the train off the track. How it got there was a mystery. Just in front there was a steep descent on either side, the road crossing a valley, so that an accident would probably cause the entire train to be thrown down the embankment. Robert saw the danger at a glance, and it flashed upon him at the same moment that the train was nearly due. He sprang to the rock, and exerted his utmost strength to dislodge it. He could move it slightly, but it was too heavy to remove. He was still exerting his strength to the utmost when the whistle of the locomotive was heard. Robert was filled with horror, as he realized the peril of the approaching train, and his powerlessness to avert it.

The cars swept on at the rate of twenty miles an hour, the engineer wholly unconcious of the peril in front. Robert saw the fated train with its freight of human lives, and his heart grew sick within him as he thought of the terrible tragedy which was about to be enacted. Was there any possibility of averting it? He threw himself against the rock and pushed with all the strength he could command. But,

nerved as he was by desperation, he found the task greater than he could compass.

And still the train came thundering on. He must withdraw to a place of safety, or he would himself be involved in the destruction which threatened the train.

There was one thing more he could do, and he did it.

He took his station on the rock which was just in the path of the advancing train, and waved his handkerchief frantically. It was a position to test the courage of the bravest.

At first he was not seen. When the engineer at last caught sight of him it was with a feeling of anger at what he regarded as the foolhardiness of the boy. He slackened his speed, thinking he would leave his place, but Robert still maintained his position, his nerves strung to their highest tension, not alone at his own danger, but at the peril which he began to fear he could not avert.

Reluctantly the engineer gave the signal to stop the train. He was only just in time. When it came to a stop there was an interval of only thirty-five feet between it and Robert Rushton, who, now that he had accomplished his object, withdrew to one side, a little paler than usual, but resolute and manly in his bearing.

"What is the meaning of this foolery?" the engineer demanded, angrily.

Robert pointed in silence to the huge rock which lay on the track.

"How came that rock there?" asked the engineer,

in a startled tone, as he took in the extent of the peril from which they had been saved.

"I don't know," said Robert. "I tried to move it, but I couldn't."

"You are a brave boy," said the engineer. "You have in all probability saved the train from destruction. But you ran a narrow risk yourself."

"I know it," was the reply; "but it was the only thing I could do to catch your attention."

The engineer left the engine and advanced toward the rock. By this time many of the passengers had got out, and were inquiring why the train was stopped at this point. The sight of the rock made a sensation. Though the peril was over, the thought that the train might have been precipitated down the embankment, and the majority of the passengers killed or seriously injured, impressed them not a little. They pressed forward, and several lending a hand, the rock was ousted from its position, and rolled crashing over the bank.

Among the passengers was a New York merchant.

"It was providential, your seeing the rock," he said to the engineer. "We owe our lives to you."

"It was not I who saved the train, but that boy."

"How was that?" inquired the merchant.

"He saw the obstruction, and tried to remove it, but not being able to do so, took his station on the track, and, at the risk of his own life drew my attention, and saved the train."

"It was a noble act, my boy; what is your name?"

"Robert Rushton."

"It is a name that we shall all have cause to re-

member. Gentlemen," continued the merchant, "shall his act go unrewarded?"

"No, no;" was the general exclamation.

"I don't want any reward," said Robert modestly. "Any boy would have done as much."

"I don't know about that, my young friend. There are not many boys, or men, I think, that would have had the courage as you did. You may not ask or want any reward, but we should be forever disgraced if we failed to acknowledge our great indebtedness to you. I contribute one hundred dollars as my share."

"I follow with fifty!" said his next neighbor.

In ten minutes the fund had reached over six hundred dollars.

"Master Robert Rushton," said the merchant, "I have great pleasure in handing you this money, freely contributed by the passengers on this train, as a slight acknowledgment of the great service which you have rendered them at the risk of your own life. It does not often fall to the lot of a boy to perform a deed so heroic. We are all your debtors, and if the time ever comes that you need a friend, I for one shall be glad to show my sense of indebtedness."

"All aboard!" shouted the conductor.

The passengers hurried into the cars, leaving our hero standing by the track, with one hand full of bank notes and in the other the card of the New York merchant. It was only about fifteen minutes since Robert had first signaled the train, yet how in this brief time had his fortunes changed! From

the cars now rapidly receding he looked to the roll of bills, and he could hardly realize that all this money was his own. He sat down and counted it over.

"Six hundred and thirty-five dollars!" he exclaimed.

"How happy mother will be!" he thought, joyfully. "I must go and tell her the good news."

He carefully stored away the money in his coat pocket, and for the sake of security buttoned it tight.

CHAPTER XI

A VISIT TO THE LAWYER

Mrs. Rushton was braiding straw when Robert entered with his berries.

"Couldn't you sell your berries, Robert?" she asked.

"I haven't tried yet, mother."

"The berrying season won't last much longer," said his mother, despondently.

"Now, mother, don't be so despondent. We've got enough money to pay our expenses for more than a year, even if we both stop work."

"What can you mean, Robert?" said his mother.

"Does that look like going to the poorhouse?" asked Robert, drawing out his money.

"Whose money is that, Robert?"

"Mine!"

"You haven't done anything wrong?"

"No, mother. I'll tell you all about it."

He sat down, and in brief words told his mother the story of the train and its peril, how he had rescued it, and, lastly, of the generous gift which he had so unexpectedly received.

"My son, I am proud of you," she said, her eyes moist. "You have done a noble deed, and you deserve the reward. But what a risk you ran!"

"I know it, mother, but we won't think of that, now that it is over. How much money do you think I have here?"

"Two or three hundred dollars."

"Six hundred and thirty-five! So you see, mother, we needn't go to the poorhouse just yet."

"I shall be afraid to have so much money in the house. If it were known, we might be robbed."

"I will leave it with Mr. Paine until I get a chance to put it in a savings bank. He has a safe in his office. At the same time I will carry him some berries as a present. It won't be much, but I should like to do it on account of his kindness about the boat. I will now offer to bear the expense of its repair."

After washing his hands and adjusting his clothes, he set out for the lawyer's office.

"Excuse my bringing in my berries," said Robert, as he entered the office, "but I want to ask your acceptance of them."

"Thank you, Robert; I will accept your gift with thanks on one condition."

"What is it, Mr. Paine?" inquired our hero, a little puzzled.

"That you will take tea with us to-morrow evening, and help us to do justice to them."

"Thank you," said Robert, not a little pleased at the invitation, "but I shouldn't like to leave my mother at home alone."

"Oh, we must have your mother, too. Hester will call this evening and invite her."

"There is one other matter I wanted to speak to you about, Mr. Paine," he said. "Will you take care of some money for me until I get a chance to deposit it in the savings bank?"

"Certainly, Robert," was the reply, but the lawyer's manner showed some surprise. He knew the circumstances of the Rushtons, and he had not supposed they had any money on hand. "How much is it?"

"Six hundred and thirty-five dollars, answered Robert, producing it.

"Is this your money?" asked the lawyer.

"Yes, sir," said Robert. "I will tell you how I got it."

So the story was told, with a modest reserve as to his own courage.

"Give me your hand, Robert," said Mr. Paine, cordially. "You have shown yourself a hero. We shall be proud of your company to tea to-morrow evening.

"There is one thing more, Mr. Paine," he added. "It's about the boat Will was kind enough to lend me."

"Have you seen the carpenter about repairing it?"

"Yes, sir, and he will attend to it as soon as he

can spare the time. Will you be kind enough to take as much of my money as will be needed to pay Mr. Plane's bill when it comes in?"

"Certainly not, Robert. It was not your fault that the boat was injured. Won't you need any of this money for present expenses?"

"Perhaps I had better take the thirty-five dollars. Mother may be in want of something."

Robert received back the sum named, and returned home, much pleased with his interview.

About seven o'clock, sitting at the window of the little cottage, he saw Hester Paine opening the front gate. He sprang to his feet and opened the door.

"Good-evening, Robert," she said. "Is your mother at home?"

"Yes, Hester. Won't you come in?"

"Thank you, Robert. Father has been telling me what a hero you were, and it made me feel proud that you were a friend of mine."

"You compliment me more than I deserve," he answered, modestly; "but it gives me great pleasure to know that you think well of me."

"I am sure there is no other boy in Millville that would have dared to do such a thing. Good-evening, Mrs. Rushton. Are you not proud of your son?"

"He is a good son to me," said Mrs. Rushton, with a glance of affection.

"It is such a splendid thing he did. He will be quite a hero. Indeed, he is one already. I've got a New York paper giving an account of the whole

thing. I brought it over, thinking you might like to read it."

She displayed a copy of a great city daily, in which full justice was done to Robert's bravery.

"I have come this evening, Mrs. Rushton, to ask you to take tea with us to-morrow evening, you and Robert. You will come, won't you?"

Mrs. Rushton was pleased with this mark of attention, and after a slight demur, accepted.

I do not intend to give an account of the next evening, and how Robert, in particular enjoyed it.

CHAPTER XII

THE MESSAGE FROM THE SEA

It was not often that Mrs. Rushton received a letter. Robert, therefore, seldom called at the post-office. One day, however, as he stepped in by a neighbor's request to inquire for letters for the latter, the postmaster said, "There's a letter for your mother, Robert."

He handed the letter to Robert, who surveyed it with curiosity. It was postmarked "Boston," and addressed in a bold business hand to "Mrs. Captain Rushton, Millville."

"Here's a letter for you, mother," he said.

"Open it for me, Robert."

He tore open the envelope. It contained two inclosures—one a letter in the same handwriting with the address, the other, a large sheet of foolscap rum-

pled up, and appearing once to have been folded up, was written in pencil. Mrs. Rushton had no sooner looked at the latter than she exclaimed, in agitation: "Robert, it is your father's handwriting. Read it to me, I am too agitated to make it out."

"First let me read the other," he said. "It will explain about this."

His mother sank back into a chair, while her son rapidly read the following letter:

"BOSTON, AUGUST 15, 1853.

"MRS. RUSHTON, DEAR MADAM: The fate of our ship *Norman*, which left this port now more than two years since, under the command of your husband, has until now been veiled in uncertainty. We had given up all hopes of obtaining any light upon the circumstances of its loss, when by a singular chance information was brought us yesterday. The ship *Argo*, while in the South Pacific, picked up a bottle floating upon the surface of the water. On opening it, it was found to contain two communications, one addressed to us, the other to you, the latter to be forwarded to you by us. Ours contains the particulars of the loss of the *Norman*, and doubtless your own letter contains the same particulars. There is a bare possibility that your husband is still alive, but as so long a period has passed since the letters were written it would not be well to place too much confidence in such a hope. But even if Captain Rushton is dead, it will be a sad satisfaction to you to receive from him this last communication, and learn the particulars of his loss. We lose no time in for-

warding to you the letter referred to, and remain, with much sympathy, yours respectfully,

"WINSLOW & CO."

"Now read your father's letter," she said.

NOVEMBER 7, 1851.

"MY DEAR WIFE AND SON: Whether these lines will ever meet your eyes I know not. The good ship *Norman,* in which I sailed from Boston not quite three months, is burned to the water's edge, and I find myself, with five of the sailors, afloat on the vast sea at the mercy of the elements, and with a limited supply of food. Hundreds of miles away from any known shores, our only hope of safety is in attracting the attention of some vessel. Fortunately I have a few sheets of paper and a pencil with me, and I write these lines, knowing well how improbable it is that you will ever read them.

But to my story: My first mate was a man named Haley—Benjamin Haley—whose name you will perhaps remember. He was the nephew of old Paul Nichols. I was not prepossessed in his favor, and was not very well pleased to find him my second in command. I think, however, that he suspected the state of my feelings, as, while studiously polite, I did not make an effort to be cordial. At any rate, he must have taken a dislike to me early in the voyage.

"After a time I found that he was disposed to encroach upon my prerogative as captain of the vessel, and issue commands which he knew to be in defiance

of my wishes. I summoned him to an interview, and informed him in decided terms that I must be master in my own ship.

"I pass over the days that succeeded—days in which Haley went to the furthest verge of insolence that he felt would be safe. At length, carried away by impatience, I reprimanded him publicly. He grew pale with passion, turned on his heel, and strode away. That night I was aroused from my sleep by the cry of 'Fire!' I sprang to my feet and took immediate measures to extinguish the flames. But the incendiary had taken care to do his work so well that it was already impossible.

"I did not at first miss Haley, until, inquiring for him, I learned that he was missing, and one of the ship's boats. It was evident that he had deliberately fired the ship in order to revenge himself upon me. His hatred must have been extreme, or he would not have been willing to incur so great a risk. Though he escaped from the ship, his position in an open boat must be extremely perilous.

"When all hope of saving the ship was abandoned, we manned the remaining boats hastily, putting in each a stock of provisions we could carry without overloading the boats. Twenty-four hours have now passed, and we are still tossing about the ocean. A storm would be our destruction. At this solemn time, my dear wife, my thoughts turn to you and my dear son, whom I am likely never to see again. There is one thing most of all which I wish you to know, but can hardly hope these few lines will reach you. Just before I left home, on my present voyage, I depos-

ited five thousand dollars with Mr. Davis, the superintendent of the factory, in trust for you, in case I should not return. You will be surprised to learn that I have so much money. It has been the accumulation of years, and was intended as a provision for you and Robert. I have no reason to doubt the integrity of Mr. Davis, yet I wish I had acquainted you with the fact of this deposit, and placed his written acknowledgment in your hands. My reason for concealment was that I might surprise you at the end of this voyage.

"When this letter comes to hand (if it ever should come to hand), in case the superintendent has not accounted to you for the money placed in his hands, let Robert go to him and claim the money in my name. Should I never return, I am persuaded that Mr. Davis will be true to the trust I have reposed in him, and come forward like an honest man to your relief.

"And now, my dear wife and son, farewell! May Heaven bless you, and permit us to meet again in another world, if not in this!

"I shall inclose this letter, and one to my owners, in a bottle, which I have by me, and commit it to the sea, trusting that the merciful waves may waft it to the shore."

Here Captain Rushton signed his name.

"Mother," said Robert, "did you know anything of this money father speaks of?"

"No," said Mrs. Rushton, "he never told me. It is strange that Mr. Davis has never informed us of it.

Two years have passed, and we have long given him up as lost."

"Mother," said Robert, "it is my opinion that he never intends to let us know."

"What shall we do?"

"I know what I am going to do," said Robert, "I am going to his house, and shall claim restitution of the money which father intrusted to him. He has had it two years, and, with the interest, it will amount to nearer six than five thousand dollars. It will be a fortune, mother."

"Don't be hasty or impetuous, Robert," said his mother. "Speak to him respectfully."

"I shall be civil if he is," said Robert.

He took his cap, and putting it on, left the cottage and walked with a quick step to the house of the superintendent.

CHAPTER XIII

A DISAGREEABLE SURPRISE

Mr. Davis was seated in his office. He was just in receipt of a letter from his broker in New York, stating that there were but slender chances of a rise in the price of some securities in which he had invested heavily. Mr. Davis felt despondent, and, it was at this moment that one of the factory hands came in and told him that Robert Rushton wished to see him.

The superintendent would have refused an inter-

view but for one consideration. He thought that our hero was about to beg to be taken back into his employ. This request he intended to refuse.

"Good-morning, sir," said Robert.

"I suppose you want to be taken back," said the superintendent.

"No, sir," said Robert. "I have come on quite a different errand.

"Then state your business at once," he said.

"My business is important to both of us," said Robert. "We have just received a letter from my father."

The superintendent started and turned pale. He supposed, of course, that Captain Rushton was alive, and likely to reclaim the sum, which he was in no position to surrender.

"Your father!" he stammered. "Where is he? I thought he was dead."

"I am afraid he is," said Robert, soberly.

"Then how can you just have received a letter from him?" demanded Mr. Davis.

Robert related the incident in his father's letter.

"How long ago was this? I mean when was the letter dated?"

"Nearly two years ago—in the November after he sailed."

"Then, of course, he must have perished," said the superintendent, with a feeling of satisfaction. "However, I suppose your mother is glad to have heard from him. Is that all you have to tell me?"

"No, sir," said Robert. "My father added in his letter, that just before sailing he deposited with you

the sum of five thousand dollars, to be given to my mother in case he never returned."

So the worst had come! The dead had revealed the secret which the superintendent hoped would never be known. He was threatened with ruin. He had no means of paying the deposit unless by sacrificing all his property, and it was doubtful whether even then he would be able wholly to make it up. If Robert possessed his acknowledgment he would have no defense to make. This he must ascertain before committing himself.

"Supposing this story to be true," he said, in a half-sneering tone, "you are, of course, prepared to show me my receipt for the money?"

"That my father carried away with him. He did not send it with the letter."

All the superintendent's confidence returned. He resolved to deny the trust altogether.

"Rushton," he said, "I have listened patiently to what you had to say, and in return I answer that in the whole course of my life I have never known of a more barefaced attempt at fraud. In this case you have selected the wrong customer."

"What!" exclaimed Robert, hardly crediting the testimony of his ears; "do you mean to deny that my father deposited five thousand dollars with you just before sailing on his last voyage?"

"I certainly do, and in the most unqualified terms. Had such been the case, do you think I would have kept the knowledge of it from your mother so long after your father's supposed death?"

"There might be reasons for that," said Robert.

"None of your impertinent insinuations, you young rascal," said Mr. Davis, hotly. "The best advice I can give you is, to say nothing to anyone about this extraordinary claim."

"Mr. Davis," he said, "if there is no truth in this story do you think my father, with death before his eyes, would have written it to my mother?"

"I have no evidence, except your word, that any such letter has been received."

"I can show it to you, if you desire it, in my father's handwriting."

"We will suppose, then, for a moment, that such a letter has been received, and was written by your father. I can understand how, being about to die, and feeling that his family were without provision, he should have written such a letter with the intention of giving you a claim upon me, whom he no doubt selected supposing me to be a rich man."

"Mr. Davis," he said, boldly, "it is enough for you to cheat my mother out of the money which my father left her, but when you accuse my father of fraud you go too far. You know better than any one that everything which he wrote is true."

"What! do you dare insult me in my own office?" he exclaimed, half rising from his desk, and glaring at our hero. "Out of my sight at once, or I may be tempted to strike you!"

"Before I leave you, Mr. Davis," said Robert, undauntedly, "I wish you to tell me finally whether you deny the deposit referred to in my father's letter?"

"And I tell you, once for all," exclaimed the super-

intendent, angrily, "if you don't get out of my office I will kick you out."

"I will leave you now," said our hero, "but you have not heard the last of me. I will not rest until I see justice done to my mother."

CHAPTER XIV

A DENIAL

Robert left the superintendent's office in deep thought. He understood very well that it would be impossible to enforce his claim without more satisfactory testimony than his father's letter. Had Captain Rushton inclosed the receipt, that would have been sufficient, but it had probably gone to the bottom with him.

Finding himself utterly at a loss, he resolved to call upon his firm friend, Squire Paine, the lawyer. Going to his office, he was fortunate enough to find him in.

"Good-morning, Robert," said the lawyer, pleasantly.

"Good-morning, sir. You find me a frequent visitor."

"Always welcome," was the pleasant reply. "You know I am your banker, and it is only natural for you to call upon me."

"Yes, sir," said Robert, smiling, "but it is on different business that I have come to consult you this morning."

"Go on. I will give you the best advice in my power."

The lawyer listened with surprise to the story Robert had to tell.

"This is certainly a strange tale," he said, after a pause.

"Do you think there is any chance of my father being yet alive?"

"There is a bare chance, but I cannot encourage you to place much reliance upon it. There might be circumstances," added the lawyer slowly, "that would prevent his communicating with friends at home."

"Is there any chance of making Mr. Davis return the money my father deposited with him?"

"Then again there are difficulties. He may demand the return of his receipt, or he may continue to deny the truth altogether."

"Won't the letter prove anything?"

"It may produce a general conviction that such a deposit was made, but unless that receipt is produced I don't see that anything can be done."

"It seems very hard that my poor father's hard earnings should go to such an unprincipled man, and my mother be left destitute."

"That is true, Robert, but I am obliged to say that your only hope is in awakening Mr. Davis to a sense of justice. If you will leave the matter in my hands, I will call upon him to-night, and see what I can do."

"I shall feel very glad if you will do so, Squire Paine. I don't want to leave anything undone."

Robert left the office, making up his mind to await

the report of the lawyer's visit before moving further.

That evening the lawyer called at the house of the superintendent.

"I may as well say to begin with," commenced the lawyer, "that I call in behalf of the family of the late Captain Rushton. I suppose you understand what I have to say?"

"I presume I can guess," said the superintendent, coldly. "The boy came into my office this morning, and made a most extraordinary claim, which I treated with contempt. Finding him persistent I ordered him out of my office. I need not say that no sane man would for a moment put confidence in such an incredible story or claim."

"I fail to see what there is incredible about it. If the handwriting can be identified as that of the late Capain Rushton, and Robert says both his mother and himself recognized it, the story becomes credible and will meet with general belief."

"You may believe it, if you please. It seems to me quite unworthy of belief."

"Waiving that point, Robert, doubtless, acquainted you with the statement made in the letter that Captain Rushton, just before sailing on his last voyage, deposited with you five thousand dollars. What have you to say to that?"

"That Captain Rushton never possessed five thousand dollars in his life. I don't believe he possessed one quarter of that sum."

"What authority have you for saying that? Did he make you his confidant?" asked the lawyer, keenly.

"Yes," said the superintendent, promptly. "When last at home, he called at my house one day, and in the course of conversation remarked that sailors seldom saved any money. 'For instance,' said he, 'I have followed the sea for many years, and many times resolved to accumulate a provision for my wife and child, but as yet I have scarcely done more than to begin.' He then told me that he had little more than a thousand dollars, but meant to increase that, if possible, during his coming voyage."

"Did he say anything about what he had done with this thousand dollars or more?" Lawyer Paine asked.

"A part he left for his wife to draw from time to time for expenses; the rest, I suppose, he took with him."

"I understand, then, Mr. Davis," he said, finally, "that you deny the justice of this claim?"

"Certainly I do," said the superintendent. "It is a palpable fraud. This boy is a precocious young swindler, and will come to a bad end. I have no doubt he got up the letter himself."

"I don't agree with you. I have seen the letter; it is in Captain Rushton's handwriting. Moreover, I have seen the letter of the owners, which accompanied it."

The superintendent was in a tight place, and he knew it. But there was nothing to do but to persist in his denial.

"Then I can only say that Captain Rushton was a party to the fraud," he said.

"You must be aware, Mr. Davis, that when the

public learns the facts in the case, the general belief will be the other way."

"I can't help that," said the other, doggedly. "Whatever the public chooses to think, I won't admit the justice of this outrageous claim."

"Then I have only to bid you good-evening," said the lawyer, coldly, affecting not to see the hand which the superintendent extended. The latter felt the slight, and foresaw that from others he must expect similar coldness, but there was no help for it. To restore the money would be ruin. He had entered into the path of dishonesty, and he was forced to keep on in it.

CHAPTER XV

ROBERT'S NEW PROJECT

Mr. Paine called at Mrs. Rushton's cottage, and communicated the particulars of his interview with the superintendent.

"It is evident," he said, "that Mr. Davis is swayed by his interests, and feeling legally secure, prefers to defraud you rather than to surrender the five thousand dollars."

"I wouldn't have believed it of Mr. Davis," said Mrs. Rushton; "he is considered such a respectable man."

"I have heard rumors that he is dabbling in speculations, and I suspect he may find it inconvenient to pay so large a sum of money."

"He had no right to speculate with my mother's money," said Robert, indignantly.

"You are right there. He should have invested it securely."

"Mr. Paine," said Robert, after a pause, "I have an idea that father is still living, and that some day I shall find him."

"I hope you will prove correct, but I need not tell you of the many arguments against such a theory."

"I know them all, but still I believe he is living. Mr. Paine," continued Robert, earnestly, "I feel so strongly on the subject that, with my mother's permission, I mean to go out into the world in search of him."

"But what will become of your mother during that time?"

"I will leave four hundred dollars in your hands for her. The rest I will draw for my own uses."

"Surely, Mrs. Rushton, you do not approve Robert's scheme?" said Mr. Paine.

But to his surprise he found that Mrs. Rushton was inclined to regard it favorably.

When the lawyer found how Mrs. Rushton felt on the subject, he ceased his objections to the plan.

"How soon do you wish to start, Robert?" he asked.

"It will take me a week to get your clothes ready," said Mrs. Rushton.

"Then by a week from Monday I will start," said Robert.

"I will go to New York first, and call on the gen-

tleman who got up the subscription for me. I will tell him my story, and ask his advice."

"The most sensible thing you can do. As to the money, I will have that ready for you. Of course, you will call on me before you go."

The superintendent had made up his mind that Robert would spread the report of the deposit, and nervously awaited the result. But to his relief he observed no change in the demeanor of his fellow-townsmen. Next he heard with a feeling of satisfaction that Robert had decided to go abroad in quest of his father. He had no doubt that Captain Rushton was dead, and regarded the plan as utterly quixotic and foolish, but still he felt glad that it had been undertaken.

"If the boy never comes back I shan't mourn much," he said to himself. "His mother is a weak woman, who will never give me any trouble, but this young rascal has a strong and resolute will, and I shall feel more comfortable to have him out of the way."

When Robert got ready to leave he made a farewell call on his lawyer, and drew two hundred dollars of his money.

"I don't know but one hundred will do," he said.

"Perhaps I ought to leave five hundred for my mother?"

"Don't have any anxiety about your mother. I had a warm regard for your father, and shall be glad to help your mother if there is any occasion. Not only this, but if in your wanderings you find

yourself in a tight place, and in want of help, write to me, and I will help you."

"You are a true friend," said Robert, gratefully. "I wish my father had intrusted his money to you instead of to the superintendent."

"I wish he had as matters have turned out. I should have taken care that your interests did not suffer. And now, Robert, good-by, and Heaven bless you. Don't forget that you can count always on my friendship and assistance."

On the way home Robert fell in with Halbert Davis. Halbert, of course, knew nothing of the claim made upon his father, but he had heard that Robert proposed to leave home. He was both sorry and glad on account of this—sorry because he had hoped to see our hero fall into poverty and destitution, and enjoy the spectacle of his humiliation. Now he was afraid Robert would succeed and deprive him of the enjoyment he had counted upon. On the other hand, Robert's departure would leave the field free so far as concerned Hester Paine, and he hoped to win the favor of that young lady in the absence of any competitor. Of this there was not the slightest chance, but Halbert was blinded by his own vanity to the obvious dislike which Hester entertained for him.

"So you're going to leave town, Rushton?" he commenced.

"If you're going to try for a place, you'd better not mention that you got turned out of the factory. You needn't apply to my father for a recommendation."

"I shall need no recommendation from your father," said Robert.

"Have you bidden farewell to Hester Paine?" he asked.

"Yes," said Robert.

"I suppose she was very much affected!" continued Halbert.

"She said she was sorry to part with me."

"I shall be good friends with her, when you are no longer here to slander me to her."

"I am not quite so mean as that," said Robert. "If she chooses to like you, I shan't try to prevent it. I must bid you good-by, as I have considerable to do."

He looked with satisfaction upon a little cornelian ring which he wore upon one of his fingers. It was of very trifling value, but it was a parting gift from Hester, and as such he valued it far above its cost.

CHAPTER XVI

A GOOD BEGINNING

On the next Monday morning Robert started for the city. Now he was about to go out into the great world, and fight his own way. With only two hundred dollars in his pocket he was going in search of a father, who, when last heard from, was floating in an open boat on the South Pacific. The probabilities were all against that father's being still alive. If he were, he had no clew to his present whereabouts.

All this Robert thought over as he was riding in the cars to the city.

Arrived in the city, he took his carpetbag in his hand and crossing the street, walked at random, not being familiar with the streets.

"I don't know where to go," thought Robert. "I wish I knew where to find some cheap hotel."

Just then a boy approached.

"Do you know of any good, cheap hotel where I can put up?" asked Robert.

"I'll show you one and take yer bag along for two shillings."

"All right," said our hero. "Go ahead."

His new guide shouldered Robert's carpetbag, and conducted him to a hotel of good standing, managed on the European system. Dismissing the boy with the promised reward, Robert went up to his room on the fifth floor, and after attending to his toilet, sallied out into the street and made his way to the warehouse of the merchant who had been instrumental in raising the fund for him.

"Mr. Morgan is engaged," said a clerk to whom he spoke.

"I will wait for him, if you please," said Robert.

Our hero was obliged to wait nearly half an hour. At the end of that time, the merchant consented to see him. He did not at first recognize him, but said inquiringly, "Well, my young friend, from whom do you come?"

"I come from no one, sir."

"Have you business with me?"

"You do not remember me, Mr. Morgan. Do you

remember when the cars came so near running off the track a short time since at Millville?"

"Certainly I do," said Mr. Morgan, heartily; "and I now remember you as the brave boy who saved all our lives."

"You gave me your card and told me I might call on you."

"To be sure, I did, and I am very glad to see you. You must go home and dine with me to-day."

"Thank you, sir, for your kind invitation."

"This is my address," said the merchant, writing it in pencil, and handing it to Robert. "We dine at half-past six. You had better be at the door at six. We will then talk over your plans, for I suppose you have some, and I will do what I can to promote them. At present I am busy, and am afraid I must ask you to excuse me."

"Thank you, sir," said Robert, gratefully.

He left the office, not a little elated at his favorable reception.

"That's a good beginning," thought Robert.

Six o'clock found him ringing the bell of a handsome brownstone house on Fifth Avenue. The door opened and a servant in livery stood before him.

"Is Mr. Morgan at home?" inquired Robert.

"Yes, sir," said the servant "If you will walk in here," opening the door of a sumptuously furnished parlor, "I will announce you. What name shall I say?"

"Robert Rushton."

Robert entered the parlor and sat down on a sofa.

He looked around him with a little pardonable curiosity, for he had never before been in an elegant city mansion.

While he was looking about him, Mr. Morgan entered, and his warm and cordial manner made his boy guest feel quite at his ease.

"I must make you acquainted with my wife and children," he said. "They have heard of you, and are anxious to see you."

Mrs. Morgan gave Robert a reception as warm as her husband had done.

I do not propose to speak in detail of the dinner that followed. The merchant and his wife succeeded in making Robert feel entirely at home, and he displayed an ease and self-possession wholly free from boldness that won their good opinion.

When the dinner was over, Mr. Morgan commenced:

"Now, Robert, dinner being over, let us come to business. Tell me your plans, and I will consider how I can promote them."

In reply, Robert communicated the particulars, already known to the reader, of his father's letter, his own conviction of his still living, and his desire to go in search of him.

"I am afraid you will be disappointed," said the merchant, "in the object of your expedition. It may, however, be pleasant for you to see something of the world, and luckily it is in my power to help you. I have a vessel which sails for Calcutta early next week. You shall go a passenger."

"Couldn't I go as a cabin-boy?" asked Robert. "I

am afraid the price of a ticket will be beyond my means."

"I think not," said the merchant, smiling, "since you will go free."

"You are very kind, Mr. Morgan," said Robert.

We pass over the few and simple preparations which Robert made for his long voyage. In these he was aided by Mrs. Morgan, who sent on board, without his knowledge, a trunk containing a complete outfit, considerably better than the contents of the humble hair trunk he had brought from home.

He didn't go on board till the morning on which the ship was to sail. He went down into the cabin, and did not come up until the ship had actually started. Coming on deck, he saw a figure which seemed familiar to him. From his dress, and the commands he appeared to be issuing, Robert judged that it was the mate. He tried to think where he could have met him, when the mate turned full around, and, alike to his surprise and dismay, he recognized Ben Haley, whom he had wounded in his successful attempt to rob his uncle.

CHAPTER XVII

A DECLARATION OF WAR

If Robert was surprised, Ben Haley had even more reason for astonishment.

"How came you here?" he exclaimed.

"I walked on board."

"You'd better not be impudent, young man," said Ben. "I am the mate of this vessel, as you will soon find out."

"So I supposed," said Robert.

"And you, I suppose, are the cabin-boy."

"You've made a mistake, Mr. Haley," said our hero. "I am a passenger."

"You are telling a lie. We don't take passengers."

"If you will consult the captain, you may learn your mistake," said Robert.

Robert turned away indifferently, so far as appearance went, but he couldn't help feeling a degree of apprehension as he thought of the long voyage he was to take in company with his enemy, who doubtless would have it in his power to annoy him, even if he abstained from positive injury.

Meanwhile the mate went up to the captain.

"Captain Evans," said he, "is that boy a passenger?"

"Yes, Mr. Haley."

"It is something unusual to take passengers, is it not?"

"Yes; but this lad is a friend of the owner; and Mr. Morgan has given me directions to treat him with particular consideration."

"I don't understand it," he said, perplexed.

"I suppose the boy is a relation of Mr. Morgan."

"Nothing of the kind. He is of a poor family, from a small country town."

"Then you know him?"

"I know something of him and his family. He is one of the most impudent young rascals I ever met."

"Indeed!" returned the captain, surprised. "From what I have seen of him, I have come to quite a different conclusion. He has been very gentlemanly and polite to me."

"He can appear so, but you will find out, sooner or later. He has not the slightest regard for truth, and will tell the most unblushing falsehoods with the coolest and most matter-of-fact air."

"I shouldn't have supposed it," said Captain Evans. "Appearances are deceitful, certainly."

"They are in this case."

Captain Evans had a mind of his own, and did not choose to adopt any man's judgment or prejudices blindly. He resolved to watch Robert a little more closely than he had done, in order to see whether his own observation confirmed the opinion expressed by the mate. Of the latter he did not know much, since this was the first voyage on which they had sailed together; but Captain Evans was obliged to confess that he did not wholly like his first officer.

Ben Haley, on his part, had learned something, but

not much. He was a little afraid that Robert would divulge the not very creditable part he had played at Millville.

He accordingly approached our hero, and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Well, my lad," he said, "I find your story is correct."

"Those who know me don't generally doubt my word," said Robert, coldly.

"Well, I don't know you, or, at least, not intimately," said Haley, "and you must confess that I haven't the best reasons to like you."

"Did you suffer much inconvenience from your wound?" asked Robert.

"Not much. It proved to be slight. You were a bold boy to wing me. I could have crushed you easily."

"I suppose you could, but you know how I was situated. I couldn't run away and desert your uncle."

"I don't know about that. You don't understand that little affair. I suppose you think I had no right to the gold I took."

"I certainly did think so."

"Then you are mistaken. My uncle got his money from my grandfather. A part should have gone to my mother, and, consequently, to me, but he didn't choose to act honestly. My object in calling upon him was to induce him to do me justice at last. But you know the old man had become a miser, and makes money his idol. The long and short of it was, that, as he wouldn't listen to reason, I determined to

take the law into my own hands, and carry off what I thought ought to come to me."

Robert listened to this explanation without putting much faith in it. It was not at all according to the story given by Mr. Nichol.

"I suppose my uncle made a great fuss about the money I carried off."

"Yes," said Robert. "It was quite a blow to him, and he has been nervous ever since for fear you would come back again. I hope you won't go near him again, for he received a severe shock the last time."

"When you get back, if you get a chance to see him privately, you may tell him there is no danger of that."

"I shall be glad to do so," said Robert.

"Well," said Haley, after a slight pause, "as we are to be together on a long voyage, we may as well be friends. Here's my hand."

To his surprise, Robert made no motion to take it.

"Mr. Haley," he said, "I don't like to refuse your hand, but when I tell you that I am the son of Captain Rushton, of the ship *Norman*, you will understand why I cannot accept your hand."

Ben Haley started back in dismay. How could Robert have learned anything of his treachery to his father? Had the dead come back from the bottom of the sea to expose him? Was Captain Rushton still alive? He did not venture to ask, but he felt his hatred for Robert growing more intense.

"Boy," he said, in a tone of concentrated passion, "you have done a bold thing in rejecting my hand. I

might have been your friend. Think of me henceforth as your relentless enemy."

He walked away, his face dark with the evil passions which Robert's slight had aroused in his breast.

CHAPTER XVIII

OUT ON THE OCEAN

We must now go back nearly two years. Five men were floating about in a boat in the Southern ocean. For a week they had lived on short allowance, and now for two days they had been entirely without food. For one day, also, they had been without water, and the torments of thirst were worse than the cravings of hunger. These men were Captain Rushton and four sailors of the ship *Norman,* whose burning has already been described.

"How is all this going to end, Bunsby?" said the captain to one of the sailors.

"I am afraid there is only one way," answered Bunsby.

The captain spoke again.

"I wish I knew whether that bottle will ever reach shore. When was it we launched it?"

"Four days since."

"I've got something here I wish I could get to my wife." He drew from his pocketbook a small, folded paper.

"What is that, captain?" asked Bunsby.

"It is my wife's fortune. That paper is good for five thousand dollars."

"Five thousand dollars wouldn't do us much good here. It wouldn't buy a pound of bread, or a pint of water."

"No; but it would—I hope it will—save my wife and son from suffering. Just before I sailed on this voyage I took five thousand dollars—nearly all my savings—to a man in our village to keep till I returned, or, if I did not return, to keep in trust for my wife and child. This is the paper he gave me in acknowledgment."

"Is he a man you can trust, captain?"

"I think so. It is the superintendent of the factory in our village—a man rich, or, at any rate, well-to-do. He has a good reputation for integrity."

"Your wife knew you had left the money in his hands?"

"No; I meant it as a surprise to her."

"It is a pity you did not leave that paper in her hands."

"What do you mean, Bunsby?" asked the captain, nervously. "You don't think this man will betray his trust?"

"I can't say captain, for I don't know the man; but I don't like to trust any man too far."

"I see that I made a mistake. I should have left this paper with my wife. Davis can keep this money, and none will be the wiser. It is a terrible temptation."

"Do you think it would do any good, Bunsby," he

said, after a pause, "to put this receipt in a bottle, as I did the letter?"

"No, captain, it is too great a risk. Besides, suppose you should be picked up, and go home without the receipt; he might refuse to pay you."

"He would do so at the peril of his life, then," said the captain fiercely. "Do you think, if I were alive, I would let any man rob me of my savings of my life? It is possible that I may perish, but you may be saved."

"Not much chance of it."

"Yet it is possible. Now, if that happens, I have a favor to ask of you."

"Name it, captain."

"I want you, if I die first, to take this paper, and guard it carefully; and, if you live to get back, to take it to Millville, and see that justice is done to my wife and child."

"I promise that, captain; but I think we shall die together."

Twenty-four hours passed. The little boat still rocked hither and thither on the ocean billows.

"I can't stand it any longer," said Jack, one of the sailors.—"I shall drink some of the sea water."

"Don't do it, Jack," said Bunsby. "You'll suffer more than ever."

"I can't," said Jack, desperately; and, scooping up some water in the hollow of his hand, he drank it eagerly. Again and again he drank with feverish eagerness.

"How is it?" said the second sailor.

"I feel better," said Jack; "my throat was so dry."

"Then I'll take some too."

The other two sailors followed the example of Jack. They felt relief for the moment, but soon their torments became unendurable. With parched throats, gasping for breath, they lay back in agony.

Unable to endure his suffering, the sailor named Jack suddenly staggered to his feet.

"I can't stand it any longer," he said, wildly; "good-by, boys," and before his companions well knew what he intended to do, he had leaped over the side of the boat, and sunk in the ocean waves.

There was a thrilling silence, as the waters closed over his body.

Then the second sailor rose to his feet.

"I'm going after Jack," he said, and he, too, plunged into the waves.

The captain rose as if to hinder him, but Bunsby placed his hand upon his arm.

"It's just as well, captain. We must all come to that and the sooner, the more suffering is saved."

"That's so," said the other sailor, tormented like the other two by thirst, aggravated by his draughts of sea-water. "Good-by Bunsby! Good-by captain! I'm going!"

He too, plunged into the sea, and Bundsby and the captain were left alone.

"You won't desert me, Bunsby," said the captain.

"No, captain. I haven't swallowed sea water like those poor fellows. I can stand it better."

"This is a fearful thing, Bunsby. If it would only rain."

"That would be some relief."

As if in answer to his wish, the drops began to fall. Eagerly they squeezed out the welcome drops from their clothing, and felt a blessed relief. They filled two bottles they had remaining with the precious fluid.

The relief was only temporary, and they felt it to be so. They were without food, and the two bottles of water would not last long.

CHAPTER XIX

FRANK PRICE

The ship *Argonaut,* bound for Calcutta, was speeding along with a fair wind, when the man at the lookout called:

"Boat in sight!"

The sailor pointed out a small boat a mile distant, nearly in the ship's track.

The boat was soon overtaken. It was the boat from the ill-fated *Norman.* Captain Rushton and Bunsby were lying stretched out in the bottom, both motionless and apparently without life. Bunsby was really dead. But there was still some life left in the captain, which, under the care of the surgeon of the ship, was carefully husbanded until he was out of immediate danger. But his system, from the long privation of food, had received such a shock, that his mind sympathizing with it, he fell into a kind of stupor, mental and physical, and though strength and vigor came slowly back Captain Rushton was in

mind a child. He did not remember who he was, or that he had a wife and child.

"Poor man!" said the captain; "I greatly fear his mind has completely given way."

"It is a pity some of his friends were not here," said the captain of the ship that had rescued him. "The sight of a familiar face might restore him."

"Is there no clew to his identity?"

"I have found none."

It will occur at once to the reader that the receipt would have supplied the necessary information, since it was dated Millville, and contained the captain's name. But this was concealed in an inner pocket in Captain Rushton's vest, and escaped the attention of the surgeon. So, nameless and unknown, he was carried to Calcutta.

Arrived at Calcutta, the question arose: "What shall we do with him?" It was at this crisis that a large-hearted and princely American merchant, resident in Calcutta, who had learned the particulars of the captain's condition, came forward, saying: "Leave him here. I will find him a home in some suitable boarding house, and defray such expenses as may be required. God has blessed me with abundant means. It is only right that I should employ a portion in his service. I hope, under good treatment, he may recover wholly, and be able to tell me who he is, and where is his home. When that is ascertained, if his health is sufficiently good, I will send him home at my own expense."

The offer was thankfully accepted, and the generous merchant was as good as his word. A home

was found for Captain Rushton in the boarding house of Mrs. Start.

"He will require considerable care, Mrs. Start," said Mr. Perkins, the merchant, "but I am ready and willing to compensate you for all the trouble to which you are put. Will you take him?"

"Certainly I will," said Mrs. Start.

"Thank you, Mrs. Start," replied the merchant. "I know the poor man could be in no better hands."

"I will do all I can for your friend."

He recovered in a considerable degree his bodily health, but mentally he remained in the same condition. Sometimes he fixed his eyes upon Mrs. Start, and seemed struggling to remember something of the past; but after a few moments his face would assume a baffled look, and he would give up the attempt as fruitless.

Leaving Captain Rushton at Calcutta, with the assurance that, though separated from home and family, he will receive all the care that his condition requires, we will return to our hero, shut up on shipboard with his worst enemy. When they met, as in the narrow limits of the ship they must do every day, the forms of courtesy passed between them. Robert always saluted the mate, and Haley responded by a nod, or a cool good-morning, but did not indulge in conversation.

With Captain Evans, on the other hand, Robert was on excellent terms. The captain liked the bold, manly boy, and talked much with him.

"Robert," said the captain one day, "how is it that

you and Mr. Haley seem to have nothing to say to each other?"

"I don't think he likes me Captain Evans," said Robert.

"Is there any reason for it, or is it merely a prejudice?"

"There is a reason for it, but I don't care to mention it. Not that it is anything that I have reason to regret, or to be ashamed of," he added hastily. "It is on Mr. Haley's account that I prefer to keep it secret."

"Is there no chance of your being on better terms?" asked the captain.

"I don't wish to be reconciled, captain," he said. "I will tell you this much, that Mr. Haley has done me and my family an injury which, perhaps, can never be repaired. I cannot forget it, and though I am willing to be civil to him, since we are thrown together, I do not want his friendship, even if he desired mine, as I am sure he does not."

Captain Evans was puzzled by this explanation, and made no further efforts to bring the two together.

Time passed, and whatever might be Ben Haley's feelings, he abstained from any attempt to injure him. Robert's suspicions were lulled to sleep, and he ceased to be as vigilant and watchful as he had been.

His frank, familiar manner made him a favorite on shipboard. He had a friendly word for all the sailors, which was appreciated, for it was known that he was the *protege* of the owner.

Among those most devoted to him was a boy of fourteen, Frank Price, who sailed in the capacity of cabin-boy. The poor boy was very seasick at first, and Captain Evans had been indulgent, and excused him from duty until he got better.

With this boy Robert, who was of about the same age, struck up a friendship, which was returned two-fold by Frank, whose heart, naturally warm, was easily won by kindness.

CHAPTER XX

THE NEW CAPTAIN

The voyage was more than half completed and nothing of importance had occurred to mark it. But at this time, Captain Evans fell sick. His sickness proved to be a fever, and was very severe. At the end of seven days, it terminated fatally, to the great grief of all on board, with whom the good-natured captain was very popular. But Ben Haley did not lament much for an event which promoted him to the command of the vessel. In secret his heart bounded with exultation at the thought that he was, for the time, master of the ship and all on board. He was not slow in asserting his new position.

Robert mourned sincerely at the death of Captain Evans. He resolved to avoid any altercation with Haley. But the latter was determined to pick a quarrel with our hero, and began to cast about for a fitting occasion.

Now that Captain Evans was dead, Robert spent much time with Frank Price. Haley observed their intimacy and mutual attachment, and unable to assert his authority over Robert, who was a passenger, determined to strike at him through his friend. His determination was strengthened by a conversation which he overheard between the boys when they supposed him beyond earshot.

"I wish Captain Evans were alive," said Frank. "I liked him, and I don't like Captain Haley."

"Captain Evans was an excellent man," said Robert.

"He knew how to treat a fellow," said Frank. "As long as he saw us doing our best, he was easy with us. Captain Haley is a tyrant."

"Be careful what you say, Frank," said Robert. "It isn't safe to say much about the officers."

"I wouldn't say anything except to you. You are my friend."

"I'm your true friend, Frank, and I don't want you to get into any trouble."

"I don't like the captain, for more reasons than I can tell you; but I shall keep quiet as long as I am on board this ship."

"Are you going back with us?"

"I don't know. It will depend on circumstances. I don't think I shall, though I might have done so had Captain Evans remained in command."

Haley overheard the last part of this conversation. He took particular notice of Robert's remark that he would keep quiet as long as he remained on board the ship, and inferred that on arrival at the

destined port our hero would expose all he knew about him. This made him uneasy, for it would injure, if not destroy, the prospect of remaining in command of the *Argonaut*.

"They shall both rue their impudence," he muttered.

The next day, when both boys were on deck, Captain Haley harshly ordered Frank to attend to a certain duty which he had already performed.

"I have done so, sir," said Frank, in a respectful tone.

"What do you mean by looking me in the face in that impudent manner?" demanded Captain Haley, furiously.

"I didn't mean to be impudent, Captain Haley," said Frank. "What have I done?"

"What have you done? You, a cabin-boy, have dared to insult your captain. Strip off your jacket!"

He knew what this order meant. Public floggings were sometimes administered on shipboard, but, under the command of Captain Evans, nothing of the kind had taken place.

Robert witnessed with indignation the captain's brutality. Haley, looking about him, caught the look with which Robert regarded him, and triumphed inwardly that he had found a way to chafe him.

"What have you got to say about it?" he demanded addressing our hero, with a sneer.

"Since you have asked my opinion," said Robert, boldly, "I will express it. Frank Price has not been guilty of any impudence, and deserves no punishment."

"What do you mean by that, sir!" angrily exclaimed Haley.

"You asked my opinion, and I gave it," said Robert, not flinching.

"I have a great mind to have you flogged, too!" said Haley.

"I am here as a passenger, and a friend of the owner of this vessel. If I receive any ill-treatment, it shall be reported to him."

Haley would gladly have knocked him down, but there was something in the resolute mien of his young passenger that made him pause. He knew that he would keep his word.

He left Robert, and walked back to Frank Price, who, not having Robert's courage, had been a terrified listener.

"Now, boy," he said, harshly, "I will give you a lesson that you shall remember to the latest day of your life."

Captain Haley signalled to one of the sailors to approach.

"Bates," he said, in a tone of authority, "give that boy a dozen lashes."

"Captain Haley," he said, not stirring from his position, "I can't do it. I have a boy of my own about the size of that lad there, and if I struck him, I'd think it was my own boy that stood in his place."

"Unless you do as I bid you, I will keep you in irons for the rest of the voyage!"

"You are the captain of this ship, and can throw me in irons, if you like," said Bates. I have refused to do no duty that belongs to me. When I signed my

name to the ship's papers, I did not agree to flog boys."

"Put him in irons!" roared the captain, incensed. "We will see who is captain of this ship!"

The mandate was obeyed, and Bates was lodged in the forecastle, securely ironed.

The captain himself was about to flog the luckless cabin-boy, when a terrible blast, springing up in an instant, as it were, struck the ship, almost throwing it upon its side. There was no time for punishment now. The safety of the ship required instant action, and Frank was permitted to replace his jacket without having received a blow.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CAPTAIN'S REVENGE

The storm which commenced so suddenly was one of great violence. Captain Haley was forced to release Bates from his irons, and order him to duty. But the result of the storm was that the vessel was driven out of her course. The wind blew all night. Toward morning it abated, and the lookout descried a small island distant about a league.

The captain looked at it through his glass.

"I can't make out what island that is," he said. "I have a mind to go on shore and explore it. A boat was lowered and the captain got in, with four sailors to row.

Just as he was about to descend into the boat, he turned to Robert, and said:

"Rushton, would you like to go with us?"

He had a boy's love of adventure, and the thought of exploring an island, struck his fancy, and he eagerly accepted the invitation.

"Jump in, then," said Haley, striving to appear indifferent.

Swiftly the boat sped through the waters, and soon reached the island.

"Now for an exploring expedition," said the captain. "Boys," addressing the sailors, "remain near the boat. I will soon be back. Rushton," he said, turning to our hero, "go where you like, but be back in an hour."

The island was about five miles in circumference. Near the shore, it was bare of vegetation but further inland there were numerous trees, some producing fruit.

"What would mother say if she could see me now?" Robert thought.

He sauntered along till he came to a little valley, descended the slope, and sat down in the shade of a broad-leaved tree. The grass beneath him made a soft couch, and he felt that he should enjoy lying there the rest of the day. But his time was limited. The captain had told him to be back in an hour, and he felt that it was time for him to be up and stirring.

As this occurred to him, he rose to his feet, and looking up, he started a little at seeing the captain himself descending the slope.

"Well, Robert," said Captain Haley,"how do you like the island?"

"Very much indeed," said our hero.

"I wonder how it would seem to live upon such an island as this?"

"I should like it very well," said Robert; "that is, if I could go off at any time. I was thinking of it when you came up."

"I am glad of that. Because," said Haley, changing his tone, "I am going to give you a chance to try it."

Robert sprang to his feet in instant alarm, but too late. Haley had grasped him by the shoulder, and in his grasp the boy's strength was nothing.

"What are you going to do?" asked Robert, with fearful foreboding.

"Wait a minute and you will see!"

The captain had drawn a stout cord, brought for the purpose, from his pocket, and dragging Robert to a tree tied him securely to the trunk.

"I am sure you cannot mean this, Captain Haley!" he said. "You won't leave me to perish miserably on this island?"

"Won't I?" returned the captain, with an evil light in his eyes. "Why won't I?"

"Surely, you will not be so inhuman?"

"Look here, boy," said the captain, "I owe you a debt, and, by Heaven, I'm going to pay it! You didn't think much of humanity when you wounded me."

"I couldn't help it," said Robert. "I didn't want to hurt you. I only wanted to protect your uncle."

"That's all very well; but, when you interfered in a family quarrel, you meddled with what did not concern you. Besides, you have been inciting my crew to mutiny."

"I have not done so," said Robert.

"I overheard you the other night giving some of your precious advice to my cabin-boy. Besides, you had the impudence to interfere with me in a matter of discipline."

"Frank Price deserved no punishment."

"That is for me to decide. When you dared to be impudent to me on my own deck, I swore to be revenged, and the time has come sooner than I anticipated."

"Captain Haley," said Robert, "in all that I have done I have tried to do right. If I have done wrong, it was because I erred in judgment. If you will let me go, I will promise to say nothing of the attempt you made to keep me here."

"You are very kind," sneered the captain; "but I mean to take care of that myself. You may make all the complaints you like after I have left you here."

By this time Robert was bound to the trunk of the tree by a cord, which passed around his waist. In addition to this, Haley tied his wrists together, fearing that otherwise he might be able to unfasten the knot. He now rose to his feet, and looked down upon the young captive, with an air of fiendish triumph.

"Have you any messages to send by me, Rushton?" he said, with a sneer.

"Are you quite determined to leave me here?" asked Robert, in anguish.

"Quite so."

"What will the sailors say when I do not return?"

"Don't trouble yourself about them. I will take care of that. If you have got anything to say, say it quick, for I must be going."

"Captain Haley," said Robert, his courage rising, and looking the captain firmly in the face, "I may die here, and so gratify your enmity; but the time will come when you will repent what you are doing."

"I'll risk that,"said Haley, coolly. "Good-by."

He walked up the slope, and disappeared from view, leaving Robert bound to the tree, a helpless prisoner.

CHAPTER XXII

A FRIEND IN NEED

Captain Haley kept on his way to the shore. The four sailors on the captain's approach got the boat in readiness to return.

"Where is the boy?" asked Haley. "Hasn't he got back?"

"No, sir."

"That is strange. I told him to be back in an hour, and it is already past that time. I will wait ten minutes for him," said Haley, taking out his watch.

The ten minutes were soon up.

"Into the boat with you," commanded the captain. "I shall wait no longer."

Slowly and reluctantly, the sailors took their places, for Robert was a favorite with them.

"Now men, give way," said Haley. "If the boy is lost, it is his own fault."

They reached the vessel in due time. There was a murmur among the crew, when it was found that Robert had been left behind; but, knowing the captain's disposition, no one except Bates dared to expostulate.

"Captain Haley," said he, approaching and touching his hat, "will you give me leave to go on shore for the young gentleman that was left?"

"No," said the captain. "My duty to the owners will not permit me to delay the ship on his account."

Bates ventured no further expostulation. He began to think busily, and finally resolved to go to the island and search for him. Now, to appropriate one of the ship's boats when the captain was on deck would be impossible, but Haley, within five minutes, went below. Bates now proceeded to carry out his plan.

"What are you going to do?" demanded one of the sailors.

"I'm going after the boy."

"You'll be left along with him."

"I'll take the risk. He shan't say he didn't have one friend."

By the connivance of his fellow-sailors, Bates got safely off with the boat, and began to pull toward the shore. He was already a mile distant from

the vessel when Captain Haley came on deck.

"Who is that in the boat?" he demanded, abruptly.

"I don't know, sir."

He pointed a glass toward the boat, and, though he could fairly distinguish the stout sailor, he suspected that it was Bates.

"The fool has gone to destruction," said Captain Haley. "I shall not go after him."

I must now go back to Robert, whom we left bound to a tree.

After the captain left him, he struggled hard to unloose the cords which bound him.

He ceased at last, tired with his efforts. A feeling of despair came over him, and the tears started unbidden to his eyes, as he thought how his mother would watch and wait for him in vain—how lonely she would feel, with husband and son both taken from her.

"If only he had left me free and unbound," thought Robert, "I might pick up a living on the island, and perhaps some day attract the attention of some vessel."

With this thought and the hope it brought, he made renewed efforts to release himself, striving to untie the cord which fastened his wrists with his teeth. He made some progress, and felt encouraged, but it was hard work, and he was compelled to stop, from time to time, to rest. It was in one of these intervals that he heard his name called. Feeling sure that there was no one on the island but himself, he thought he was deceived. But the sound came nearer, and he distinctly heard "Robert!"

"Here I am!" he shouted, in return, his heart filled with sudden thanksgiving.

The sound reached Bates, who was exploring the island in search of our hero. Looking around him, he at length, from the edge of the valley, descried Robert.

Bates saw his situation with surprise and indignation.

He quickened his steps and was soon at the side of our hero.

"Who tied you to the tree, lad?" he asked.

"It was Captain Haley that tied me here," said Robert.

In five minutes Robert was free. He stretched out his limbs, with a feeling of great relief, and then turned to Bates, whose hand he grasped.

"I owe my life to you, Bates," he said.

"Maybe not, my lad. We're in a tight place yet."

"Has the ship gone?"

"Most likely. The captain won't send back for either of us in a hurry."

"And you have made yourself a prisoner here for my sake?" asked Robert, moved by the noble conduct of the rough sailor.

"I couldn't abide to leave you alone. There's more chance for two than for one."

"Heaven bless you, Bates! I won't soon forget what you have done for me. Do you think there is any chance for us?"

"Of course there is, lad. We've got a boat, and we can live here till some vessel comes within sight."

"Let us go down to the shore, and see if we can see anything of the ship."

They could still see the ship, but it was already becoming a speck in the distant waters.

"They have left us," said Robert turning to his companion.

"I didn't think any man would be so inhuman."

"You're young lad, and you don't know what a sight of villainy there is in the world. We've got to live here a while, likely. Have you seen anything in the line of grub hereabouts?"

"There is fruit on some of the trees."

"That's something. Maybe we shall find some roots, besides. We'll draw the boat farther upon shore, and go on an exploring expedition."

The boat was completely drawn up, and placed, bottom upward, at a safe distance from the sea. Then Robert and his companion started to explore the island which had so unexpectedly become their home.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ISLAND REALM

But for the knowledge that he was a prisoner, Robert would have enjoyed their present situation. The island, though small, was covered with a luxuriant vegetation, and was swept by cooling breezes, which tempted the ardor of the sun's rays.

"I wonder what is the name of this island?" said Robert.

"Perhaps it has no name. Mayhap we are the first that ever visited it."

"How long do you think we shall have to stay here?" asked Robert, anxiously.

"There's no telling, lad. We'll have to stick up a pole on the seashore, and run up a flag when any vessel comes near."

"We have no flag."

"Have you a handkerchief?"

"Only one," said Robert.

"That's one more than I have. We'll rig that up when it's wanted."

"Where shall we sleep?"

"That's what I've been thinking. We must build a house."

They set to work at once, and built a hut, something like an Indian's wigwam, about a hundred yards from the shore. It was composed, for the most part, of branches of trees, and inclosed an inner space of about fifteen feet in diameter. They gathered large quantities of leaves, which were spread upon the ground for beds.

"That's softer than our bunks aboard ship," said Bates.

"Yes," said Robert. "I wouldn't wish any better bed. It is easy to build and furnish a house of your own here."

"The next thing is dinner," said his companion.

"Shall we go to market?" asked Robert, with a smile. "We'll find a market just outside."

"You mean the trees?"

"Yes; we'll find our dinner already cooked on them."

The fruit of which they partook freely was quite sweet and palatable. Still one kind of food cloys after a time, and so our new settlers found it.

"I feel as if I should like some fish for breakfast," said Robert one morning, on waking up.

Then they rigged fishing lines—cutting poles from the trees—and armed with their hooks, of which, by good luck, Bates happened to have a supply with him. Then they launched the ship's boat, in which Bates had come to the island, and put out to sea.

Robert enjoyed the row, and in about half an hour had succeeded in catching four fishes, weighing perhaps fifteen pounds altogether.

"That'll be enough for us, unless you are very hungry," said Robert. "Now, suppose we land and cook them."

"Ay, ay, lad!"

Of course, their cooking arrangements were very primitive. In the first place, they were compelled to make a fire by the method in use among the savages, of rubbing two sticks smartly together, and catching the flame in a little prepared tinder. The fish were baked over the fire thus kindled. Though the outside was smoked, the inside was sweet and palatable and neither was disposed to be fastidious. The preparation of the meal took considerable time, but they had abundance of that, and occupation prevented their brooding over their solitary situation.

"I wish I had 'Robinson Crusoe' here," said Rob-

ert—"we might get some hints from his adventures. I didn't imagine, when I used to read them, that I should ever be in a similar position."

"I've heard about him," asid Bates; "but I never was much of a reader, and I never read his yarn. You might maybe tell me something of it."

"I will tell you all I can remember, but that isn't very much," said Robert.

He rehearsed to the attentive sailor such portions as he could call to mind of the wonderful story which for centuries to come is destined to enchain the attention of adventurous boys.

"That's a pretty good yarn," said Bates, approvingly. "Did he ever get off the island?"

"Yes, he got off, and became quite rich before he died."

"Maybe it'll be so with us, lad."

"I hope so. I don't know what I should do if I were alone as he was. It's selfish in me, Bates, to be glad that you are shut up here with me, but I cannot help it."

"You needn't try, lad. It would be mighty dull being alone here, 'specially if you was tied to a tree."

"But suppose we should never get off!"

"We don't suppose that, lad. We are sure to get off some time."

This confident assurance always cheered up Robert, and for the time inspired him with equal confidence. But when day after day passed away and the promised ship did not come in sight, he used to ponder thoughtfully over his situation, and the possibility that he might have to spend years at least

on this lonely island. What in the meantime would become of his mother? She might die, and if he ever returned it would be to realize the loss he had sustained. The island, pleasant as it was, began to lose its charm. If his sailor companion ever shared his feelings, he never manifested them, unwilling to let the boy see that he was becoming discouraged.

At length—about six weeks after their arrival upon the island—they were returning from an excursion to the other side of the island, when, on arriving in sight of the shore, an unexpected sight greeted their eyes.

A pole had been planted in the sand, and from it waved the familiar flag, dear to the heart of every American—the star-spangled banner.

They no sooner caught sight of it, than, in joyful excitement, they ran to the shore with all the speed they could muster.

CHAPTER XXIV

A SUCCESSFUL MISSION

There was no one in sight, but it was evident that a party from an American ship had visited the island. Instinctively the eyes of both sought the sea. They saw an American ship riding at anchor a mile or more from shore.

"Give me your handkerchief, Robert," said Bates; "I'll signal them."

He waved the handkerchief aloft, and felt sure that he had attracted the attention of those on board. But there was no motion to put off a boat.

"Do you think they see it?" asked Robert, eagerly.

"I think so."

"Do you think they will come for us? If not, we can put off in our boat."

"I think the party that planted that flag staff hasn't got back. It is exploring the island, and will be back soon."

"Of course it is," said Robert, suddenly. "Don't you see their boat?"

"Ay, ay, lad; it's all right. All we've got to do is to stay here till they come."

They had not long to wait. A party of sailors, headed by an officer, came out of the woods, and headed for the shore. They stopped short in surprise at the sight of Robert and Bates.

"Who are you?" asked the leader, approaching.

Bates touched his hat, for he judged this was the captain of the vessel he had seen.

"I am a sailor from the ship *Argonaut,* bound from New York to Calcutta, and this young gentleman is Robert Rushton, passenger aboard the same ship."

"Where is your ship?"

"I don't know, captain."

"How long have you been here?"

"Six weeks."

"We are anxious to get away, captain," said Robert. "Will you take us?"

"To be sure I will. There's room enough on my

ship for both of you. But I can't understand how you were left here."

"It's a long yarn, captain," said Bates.

"You look like a good seaman," said the captain, addressing Bates. "If you will engage with me, I will enroll you among my crew."

"That I'll do," said Bates, with satisfaction.

"My ship is the Superior, bound from Boston to Calcutta; so your destination will be the same. My name is Smith."

"We might offer the captain our boat," suggested Robert.

The offer was made and accepted; and while the captain and his party returned in one boat, Robert and Bates rowed to the ship in their own, and were soon on the deck of the Superior, to their unbounded satisfaction.

"This is something like," said Bates. "The island is well enough, but there's nothing like the deck of a good ship."

"I don't think I wholly agree with you," said Robert, smiling; "but just at present I do. I am glad enough to be here. We may meet Captain Haley in Calcutta," he added, after a pause.

"Likely he'll be away before we get there."

"I hope not. I should like to meet him face to face, and charge him with his treachery. I don't think he'll be over glad to see me."

"How long do you want to stay in Calcutta?"

"Only long enough to look about for my father."

"Then you can return to New York in my ship. It shall cost you nothing."

At last they reached Calcutta. Robert surveyed with much interest the great city of India, so different in its external appearance from New York, the only great city besides that he knew anything about.

"Well, Robert," said Captain Smith, on their arrival, "what are your plans? Will you make your home on board the ship, or board in the city, during our stay in port?"

"I think," said Robert, "I should prefer to live in the city, if you would recommend me to a good boarding place."

"That I can do. I am in the habit of boarding at a quiet house kept by a widow. Her terms are reasonable."

"Thank you, Captain Smith. I shall be glad to follow your advice."

So it happened that Captain Smith and Robert engaged board at the house of Mrs. Start, where it will be remembered that Captain Rushton was also a boarder.

When dinner was announced, Robert and the captain were early in their seats, and were introduced to the other boarders as they came in. Finally Captain Rushton entered, and moved forward to a seat beside the landlady. Robert chanced to look up as he entered, and his heart made a mighty bound when he recognized his father.

"Father!" he exclaimed, eagerly, springing from his seat, and overturning his chair in his haste.

Captain Rushton looked at him for a moment in bewilderment. Then all at once the mists that had

obscured his faculties were dispelled, and he cried, "Robert! my dear son, how came you here?"

"I came in search of you, father. Thank heaven I have found you alive and well."

"I think I have been in a dream, Robert."

But tell me, how came you here?"

"I am indebted to the kindness of this gentleman —Captain Smith, father—who rescued me from great peril."

This scene, of course, excited great astonishment among the boarders, and the worthy landlady, who had been uniformly kind to Captain Rushton, was rejoiced at his sudden recovery. Feeling that mutual explanations in public would be unpleasant, she proposed to send dinner for both to Captain Rushton's room, and this offer was gladly accepted.

"And how did you leave your mother, Robert?" asked the captain.

"She was well, father, but mourning for your loss."

"I wish I could fly to her."

"You shall go back with me in Captain Smith's vessel. I am sure he will take us as passengers."

"So we will. You are sure your mother is well provided for? But Mr. Davis has, no doubt, supplied her with money?"

"Not a cent, father."

"Not a cent! I deposited five thousand dollars with him for her benefit just before sailing!"

"So you wrote in the letter which you sent in the bottle."

"Was that letter received?"

"Yes; it was that that led me to come in search of you."

"And did you go to Mr. Davis?"

"He denied the deposit, and demanded to see the receipt."

"The villain! He thought I was at the bottom of the sea, and the receipt with me. He shall find his mistake!"

"Then you have the receipt still, father?"

"To be sure I have," and Captain Rushton drew it from the pocket where it had laid concealed for two years and more.

Robert regarded it with satisfaction.

"He won't dare to deny it after this. I wish we were going back at once."

Father and son exchanged narrations. Captain Rushton was astonished to find that the same man, Ben Haley, who had been the cause of his misfortunes, had also come so near compassing the destruction of his son.

CHAPTER XXV

DEFEATED

In due time the Superior cleared for New York, and among the passengers were Robert and his father. Since the meeting with his son Captain Rushton's mental malady had completely disap-

peared, and his mental recovery affected his physical health favorably. Leaving the two to pursue their voyage home, we return to Captain Haley.

After leaving Robert to his fate, he kept on his way, rejoicing.

One day on reaching Calcutta he had a surprise.

He met Captain Rushton one day when out walking. Could his eyes deceive him, or was this really the man whom he had so grossly injured?

He did not again catch sight of Captain Rushton while in Calcutta.

Captain Haley's ship reached New York on the same day with the Superior, bearing as passengers Robert and his father. Our hero lost no time in calling upon his friend, Mr. Morgan, and actually reached the office an hour before Haley, the Superior having reached her pier a little in advance of the other vessel.

When Robert walked into the office, Mr. Morgan, who was at his desk, looked up and recognized him at once.

"Welcome back. I'm glad to see you, but I didn't expect you quite so soon. How did it happen you come in advance of the captain?"

"After I have told my story, you can judge for yourself. I did not return on your vessel, Mr. Morgan, but on the Superior, Captain Smith."

"How is that?" asked the merchant, surprised.

"Because Captain Haley left me on an island in the Southern Ocean, bound to a tree, and probably supposes that I am dead."

"Your story seems incredible, Robert. Give me

a full account of all that led to this action on the part of the captain."

Robert related what had happened to him in a straightforward manner, and Mr. Morgan never thought of doubting his statements.

"This Haley must be a villain," he said. "You are indeed, fortunate in having escaped from the snare he laid for you."

"I have been fortunate in another way, also," said Robert.

"I found my father in Calcutta, and I have brought him home with me."

"Were your father's adventures as remarkable as yours?"

"It was the same man who nearly succeeded in accomplishing the ruin of both. Captain Haley was my father's mate, and it was he who, in revenge, set fire to the vessel in mid-ocean, and then escaped."

Scarcely had this revelation been made, when a clerk entered, and approaching Mr. Morgan, said, "Captain Haley would like to see you."

"I wish to know what explanation Mr. Haley has to give of your disappearance. There is a closet. Go in, and close the door partially, so that you may hear what passes without yourself being seen."

"Good-morning, Mr. Morgan," he said.

"Good-morning, sir," said the merchant, formally. "Captain Haley, I believe?"

"Yes, sir. I succeeded to the command of the *Argonaut* upon the lamented death of my friend, Captain Evans. His death happened on our passage out.

I proceeded at once to Calcutta, and after disposing of the cargo sailed for home."

"I hope Mr. Morgan," he said, "that you have sufficient confidence in me to intrust me with the command of the *Argonaut* on her next voyage.

"We will speak of that matter hereafter," Mr. Morgan said. "Did my young friend, Robert Rushton, return with you?"

Now was the critical moment. In spite of his audacity, Haley felt embarrassed.

"No, sir," he replied. "I hesitate to speak plainly. I know you will be pained by what I have to tell you."

"Don't consider my feelings, Captain Haley, but say what you have to say."

"I will do so. Shortly after the death of Captain Evans and my accession to the command I found that this boy was trying to undermine my influence with the men, from what motives I cannot guess. I remonstrated with him, mildly but firmly, but only received insolence in return. Nevertheless I continued to treat him well on account of the interest you felt in him. So things went on till we reached Calcutta. He left me at that time, and to my surprise did not return to the ship. I was able to account for his disappearance, however, when I missed one hundred and fifty dollars, of which I have not the slightest doubt that he robbed me. I should have taken measures to have him arrested, but since you felt an interest in him I preferred to suffer the loss in silence. I fear, Mr. Morgan, that you have been greatly deceived in him."

"I suspect that I have been deceived," said Mr.

Morgan, gravely. "It is only fair, however, Captain Haley, to hear both sides, and I will therefore summon the boy himself to answer your charge. Robert!"

At the summons, Robert stepped from the closet in which he had been concealed.

"What have you to say, Robert?" asked the merchant.

"Captain Haley knows very well the falsehood of what he says," said our hero, calmly. "It was not at Calcutta I left the *Argonaut*, nor was it of my own accord. Captain Haley, with his own hands, tied me to a tree on a small island in the Southern Ocean, and there left me, as he supposed, to a solitary death. But Heaven did not forsake me, and sent first a brave sailor and afterward a ship to my assistance. The charge that I stole money from him I shall not answer, for I know Mr. Morgan will not believe it."

Captain Haley was not a fool, and he knew that it would be useless to press the charge further.

He rose from his seat; his face was dark with anger and smarting under a sense of defeat.

"You have not done with me yet," he said to Robert, and without another word left the office.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CUP AND THE LIP

Affairs in Millville had gone on much as usual. Mrs. Rushton had received no letter from Robert since the one announcing his being about to sail for Calcutta, and this made her naturally anxious. But Mr. Paine assured her that letters were likely to be irregular, and there was no ground for alarm.

Meanwhile, fortune had improved with Mr. Davis, the superintendent of the factory. He had lost largely by speculation, but had blundered at last into the purchase of a stock in which some interested parties had effected a corner. It went up rapidly, and on the morning when we introduce him again to the reader he was in high spirits, having just received intelligence from his broker that he had cleared seven thousand dollars by selling at the top of the market.

Seeing that his father appeared in good humor, Halbert ventured to prefer a request, which, however, he had little hope of having granted.

"Have you seen Will Paine's pony?" he said. "It's a regular beauty."

"How much did it cost?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"I wish you would buy me one, father."

"I think I will," said the superintendent. "I can afford you a pony as well as Mr. Paine can afford to buy William one."

"Thank you!" said Halbert. "You are very kind. When will you see about it?"

"I am busy. You may go yourself and ask Mr. Paine where he got William's pony, and if he knows of any other equally good."

"By the way, Mrs. Davis," said her husband, "I think you mentioned last week that the parlor needed a new carpet."

"So it does. The old one is looking very shabby."

"Well, you may order one."

It was his wife's turn to be astonished, for on broaching the subject the week previous, her husband had given her a lecture on extravagance, and absolutely refused to consider her request. This was before the tidings of his good fortune. She was not slow to accept the present concession, and assumed an unusually affectionate manner, in the excess of her delight.

Meanwhile, Halbert, in opening the front door, came in collision with a boy taller and stouter than himself, brown and sunburned. But changed as he was, he was not slow in recognizing his old enemy, Robert Rushton.

"What, are you back again?" he said, ungraciously.

"So it appears. Is your father at home?"

"Yes; but he is at breakfast. I don't think you can see him."

"I'll make the attempt, at any rate," said Robert.

"Where have you been all this time?" asked Halbert, more from curiosity than interest.

"I went to Calcutta."

"Where did you get your money to pay the passage?"

"I'm sorry that I can't stop to gratify your curiosity just at present, but I have important business with your father."

"I wouldn't advise you to put on so many airs, just because you've been to Calcutta."

"I never thought of putting on any. I see you haven't changed much since I went away. You have the same agreeable, gentlemanly manners."

"Do you mean to say that I am not a gentleman?" blustered Halbert.

"No. You may be one, but you don't show it."

"I have a great mind to put you out of the yard."

"I think you would find it a difficult undertaking," he said.

Halbert did not deign to respond, but walked off, holding his nose very high in the air. Then, as he thought of the pony, he quickened his pace, and bent his steps to Mr. Paine's office.

"A young man to see you, Mr. Davis," said Bridget.

"Who is it?"

"I think it's young Robert Rushton."

"That boy home again!" exclaimed the superintendent, in displeased surprise. 'Well, you may ask him into the next room."

"Good-morning, Mr. Davis," said Robert, as the superintendent entered.

"Good-morning. When did you get home?" was the cold reply.

"Last evening."

"Where have you been?"

"To Calcutta."

"Where did you raise money to pay your expense?"

"I found friends who helped me."

"May I ask what is your motive in calling upon me?" asked Mr. Davis. "I suppose you have some object."

"I have. You remember, before I sailed for Calcutta, I called here and asked you to restore the sum of five thousand dollars deposited with you by my father?"

"I remember. No such sum was ever deposited with me by your father."

"How can you say that, when my father expressly stated it in the letter, written by him, from the boat in which he was drifting about on the ocean?"

"I have no proof that the letter was genuine, and even if it were, I deny the claim. I am not responsible for money I never received."

"I understand you then to refuse to pay the money?"

"You would have understood it long ago, if you had not been uncommonly thick-headed," sneered the superintendent. "Let this be the end of it. When you present my note of acknowledgment for the amount, I will pay it, and not before."

"That is all I ask," said Robert.

"What do you mean?" asked Davis, startled.

"I mean this, Mr. Davis, that I found my father

in Calcutta. He came home with me, and, far from having perished at sea, is now alive and well. He has with him your note for five thousand dollars, and will present it in person."

"You are deceiving me!" exclaimed Davis, in consternation.

"You will soon learn whether I am deceiving you or not," said Robert. "I will now bid you good-morning. My father will call upon you in the course of the day."

He rose to go, leaving the superintendent thunderstruck at the intelligence of Captain Rushton's return. The five thousand dollars, with arrears of interest, would take the greater part of the money whose sudden acquisition had so elated him. While he was considering the situation, his wife entered.

"I think, Mr. Davis," she said, "I will go to New York to-day to buy the carpeting, if you can spare the money."

"Neither now, nor at any other time," he roared, savagely; "the old carpet must do."

"Why, then, did you tell me fifteen minutes since that I might buy one? What do you mean by such trifling, Mr. Davis?" said his wife, her eyes flashing.

"I mean what I say. I've changed my mind. I can't afford to buy a new carpet."

There was a stormy scene between man and wife which may be passed over in silence. It ended with a fit of hysterics on the part of Mrs. Davis, while her husband put on his hat and walked gloomily over to the factory. Here he soon received a call from

Halbert, who informed him, with great elation, that Mr. Paine knew of a desirable pony which could be had on the same terms as his son's.

"I've changed my mind," said his father. "A pony will cost too much money."

All Halbert's entreaties were unavailing, and he finally left his father's presence in a very unfilial frame of mind.

CHAPTER XXVII

CONCLUSION

The arrival of Captain Rushton, confidently supposed to be dead, produced a great sensation in Millville. Mrs. Rushton was doubly happy at the unexpected return of her husband and son.

When Captain Rushton called upon the superintendent, he tried to evade immediate payment, but on this point his creditor was peremptory. As it was, he received his money in full, nearly six thousand dollars, which he at once invested in bank stock, yielding a good annual income. Only the day after the payment of this sum, a committee of investigation appointed by the directors, whose suspicions had been excited, visited the factory, and subjected the superintendent's books to a thorough scrutiny. The result showed that Mr. Davis, had for years pursued a system of embezzlement, and had appropriated to his own use from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars belonging to the corporation. While this in-

vestigation was pending, the superintendent disappeared, leaving his wife and son unprovided for. His estate was seized in part satisfaction of the amount he had appropriated, and Halbert's pride was brought low. In fact, he had exchanged positions with Robert, who was now possessed of a considerable inheritance.

The old farmer, Paul Nichols, whom Robert tried to defend from his unprincipled nephew, Ben Haley, died suddenly of heart disease. But shortly after Haley's visit, his uncle made a will, which he deposited in the hands of Lawyer Paine. On the day after the funeral, the lawyer met Captain Rushton and Robert, and said:

"Will you come to my office this afternoon at three o'clock?"

"Certainly," said the captain.

Three o'clock found them in Lawyer Paine's office.

"Gentlemen," said the lawyer, "I am about to read the last will and testament of our neighbor, Paul Nichols, recently deceased."

"Having no near relatives, except Benjamin Haley, for whom I have neither regard nor affection, and who, moreover, has recently stolen a considerable sum of money from me, I leave all of which I may die possessed, whether in land or money, to my brave young friend, Robert Rushton, who courageously defended me from my said nephew, at his own bodily risk, and I hope he may live long to enjoy the property I bequeath him."

No one was more surprised than Robert at the

unexpected inheritance. It may be said here that, his inheritance amounted to quite ten thousand dollars.

"It is a good thing to have a rich son," said Captain Rushton, humorously. "Robert, I hope you won't look down upon me on account of my comparative poverty."

"Father," said Robert, "I wish you would take this money—I don't want it."

"I shall do nothing of the kind, Robert. It is fairly and deservedly yours. I will take care of it for you, and if you choose to pay your own expenses out of your income, I shall allow you to do so, since you are now rich and prosperous."

"You must take all the income, father. Then it will not be necessary for you to go to sea again."

"I have already made up my mind to stay on land hereafter," said Captain Rushton. "My cruise in an open boat without provisions has cured me of my love for the sea. With the little money I saved, and the help of a rich son, I think I can afford to stay on shore."

The cottage was enlarged by the erection of another story, as well as by the addition of a wing and the throwing out of two bay windows, and was otherwise refitted and metamorphosed by fresh paint and new furniture, that it became one of the most attractive houses in Millville. Captain Rushton, who knew something of agriculture, decided to carry on Robert's farm himself, and found the employment both pleasant and profitable.

When Ben Haley heard that his uncle's estate had

been bequeathed to the boy whom he had persecuted, his rage and disappointment were unbounded. If he had not been within two hours of sailing in command of a ship bound to South America, he would at once have gone down to Millville, and in his fury he might have done serious injury to the boy who had superseded him. But he could not delay the day of sailing. This was destined to be his last voyage. When at Rio Janeiro, he became engaged in a fracas with the keeper of a low grog-shop, when the latter, who was a desperate ruffian, snatched a knife from his girdle, and drove it into the heart of the unhappy captain, who fell back on the floor and expired without a groan. Thus terminated a misguided and ill-spent life.

Robert, being now in easy circumstances, decided to pursue his studies for two years longer. He then entered upon a business life under the auspices of his friend, Mr. Morgan, and promises in time to become a prominent and wealthy merchant. He passes every Sunday at home in the little cottage occupied by his father, who, however, has ceased to be a farmer, having been promoted to the post of superintendent of the factory, formerly occupied by Mr. Davis. For the first twelve months the post was filled by a new man, who proved to be incompetent, and then was offered to Captain Rushton, whose excellent executive talents were well known. He soon made himself familiar with his duties, and the post is likely to be his as long as he cares to hold it.

Hester Paine, as a young lady, fulfills the promise of her girlhood. The mutual attachment which ex-

isted between her and Robert, when boy and girl, still continues, and there is some ground for the report which comes from Millville—that they are engaged. The alliance will be in the highest degree pleasing to both families, for if Hester is fair and attractive, Robert is energetic and of excellent principles, and possessed of precisely those qualities which, with a fair good fortune will, under the favor of Providence, insure his success in life.